



Top Projects

From the 2016 Award Entries

These programs and projects were selected as the Top Projects by the GFWC Special Project, Community Service Program, and Advancement Area Chairmen. The lists were comprised from the State Award Entries and Club Creativity Award Entries submitted by state chairmen.

LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC POLICY ADVANCEMENT AREA

Advocacy for Headquarters Site

The GFWC Mississippi State President alerted all clubs that there was a threat rising in the state legislature to the GFWC Mississippi State Headquarters. The building, a designated National Historic Site, had been the state headquarters for 80 years. A member of the state legislature wanted to terminate the 80 year-old lease policy and sell the land site. It was alleged that he questioned why the state should have such a lease agreement with a “bunch of old ladies.” This comment triggered weeks of intense advocacy utilizing the president’s ten talking points for communications to members of the Mississippi Legislature, as well as the Lt. Governor and the Governor. The project was led and coordinated by the GFWC Mississippi State President. The high speed, expertly planned, and relentless campaign enlightened the Mississippi Governor and members of the state legislature. The MFWC’s “old ladies”, young ladies, and in-between ladies meant to win this battle. Waves of phone calls, emails, and USPS letters to the legislators and Governor, in addition to face-to-face meetings at the Capitol and Governor’s office, won the battle. The legislature adopted and the Governor signed into law a new 15-year lease, plus an option for extending the lease for an additional 15 years.

Domestic Violence Action Coalition

The GFWC Covina Woman’s Club (CA) and their Domestic Violence Action Coalition (DVAC) is a statewide powerhouse of hundreds of Federation Clubwomen, politicians, nonprofit organizations, and concerned citizens who address the most pressing issues in the fight against domestic violence and violence against women. The GFWC Covina Woman’s Club works towards helping society adopt better solutions, better policies, and better legislation. The club coordinated workshops on cultural competency and diversity for college students and teens for other GFWC California clubs and community organizations. One of the current issues being addressed by DVAC is that a large share of current legislation on campus sexual assault excludes military campuses, leaving female military students, who have dedicated their lives to the service to our nation, vulnerable. The DVAC issues calls for members to contact their legislators when needed. They will not stop until women can safely exercise their human rights without fear of violence.

Legislation Day

The West Essex Woman’s Club (NJ) of 10 members holds a legislation day featuring a letter writing workshop for the general public. The workshop deals with local, state, and national issues. On the national level, letters were written on the following issues: Mental Health, Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention, Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence and Stalking, and Animals in Domestic Violence. They also post the ALMANAC (state newsletter) in their local Senior Citizen Residence to keep the community updated on current issues.

Advocacy for Human Trafficking Bills

The GFWC Tampa Woman’s Club, GFWC Ruskin Woman’s Club, and GFWC Sun City Woman’s Club (FL) were on the ground floor of making a difference on the issue of Human Trafficking in Florida. Members sent letters and emails to their Florida House and Senate representatives on Human Trafficking bills pending in the state legislature. Due to their tireless efforts, the bills were passed in the legislature and the governor signed four human trafficking bills into law.

Advocacy for Education

The GFWC Barbourville Junior Woman’s Study Club (KY) supported legislation throughout the year by working with the Kentucky Education Association to promote awareness of pending educational standards, regulations,

and changes. Club members also contacted local and state representatives regularly regarding their community, children, and families.

Club Engagement with Legislative Issues

GFWC of Holden Beach (NC) took a very creative and systematic approach to the Legislation and Public Policy area. Goals included: providing a list of all legislators, both state and national, to members; having all members sign up for the GFWC Legislative Action Center; and engaging members in local, state, and national legislation issues. Monthly reports were given at their club meetings and were published in the club newsletter. In addition, the legislation chairman copies the GFWC Legislation and Public Policy chairman and GFWC Legislative Consultant. In total, 26 bills and 14 issues were tracked with 23 members contacting legislators 208 times.

Advocacy for Family Care Act

The Four Corner's Woman's Club (GA) applied for and received a grant of \$650 from the "9 to 5 Coalition" to promote Georgia House Bill 242, "The Family Care Act." The club advocated for the bill and arranged a successful community workshop that provided public awareness and built support for the legislation.

Advocacy for Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention

The GFWC Fairfield History Club (TX) began a grassroots effort that captured the attention of the entire community—advocating for legislation that would mandate two hours yearly training for all Texas educators and para-professionals in youth suicide awareness and prevention. The club drafted a resolution to support the effort and it advanced to GFWC Texas and clubwomen across Texas united in the effort to pass HB 2186. When time was running out and it appeared in the last hours of the 2015 legislative session that the bill would not be put on the docket for a vote, the club spread the word to all GFWC Texas District Presidents to inform their clubs to act immediately. Members were given a specific message to convey and instructed to start calling the offices of every legislator in the state and to keep it up until further notice. For two days the clubwomen called and called. Finally they were given the message from a legislator's office—no more calls—the bill has passed!

Advocacy for Highway Safety

The Liberty Woman's Club (TX) worked tirelessly to protect Texas Highways from "triple trailers" in 2014. GFWC members were asked to take action to make their voices heard. Members joined with the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT) to oppose legislation allowing bigger trucks on U.S. Highways. GFWC accepted the challenge and fought to prevent bigger trucks on U.S. highways with thousands of letters, emails, and phone calls to various members of Congress in 2015. The GFWC Texas Magnolia District created a video to show the actual length of the trucks and the additional 22 feet needed for the truck to stop. It was a very effective use of social media! GFWC sent a legislative alert to members to take action. In December 2015, the U.S. House of Representatives released the long-anticipated omnibus appropriations bill to fund the federal government. The controversial provision to allow longer double-trailer trucks, referred to as double 33s, did not make it into the bill. Congratulations GFWC members, you helped make this happen! This was a clear victory for highway safety, and GFWC members across the country were part of that success.

View the YouTube video GFWC Texas Magnolia District against Bigger Trucks at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVVqaiJzr60>