

Dear GRCA Community,

Recently, there has been a lot of press regarding the Girls Rock Camp Foundation. The GRCF has gained exposure for a photo campaign, a gala, and a tour with Speedy Ortiz and other bands. These events and the accompanying publicity they've received have raised a lot of questions from our camps, supporters, and communities at large. We at the GRCA Board would like to address some of those questions and clarify the work of the Girls Rock Camp Alliance as well as that of the Girls Rock Camp Foundation.

The Girls Rock Camp Alliance is a collective of girls rock camps from around the world. We share a mission and emphasis on social justice, while serving as a network for girls rock camp organizers to share intellectual resources and experience, gain community support, and strengthen the overall movement. Since the GRCA's inception in 2007, we've hosted an international conference every year where girls rock camp volunteers and staff can meet up and strategize on how to better achieve our collective goals. Board members are elected at the GRCA conference to focus on movement building and make decisions about how to best go about doing our work. The GRCA is a membership driven organization, meaning that ultimately the board answers to the broader membership base of girls rock camps, and uses membership input to meticulously shape those decisions.

The Girls Rock Camp Foundation is its own independent organization, not affiliated with the Girls Rock Camp Alliance. The Foundation exists as a platform to help raise funds for individual camps. While this is a need that the majority, if not every member camp has, it is something that the GRCA decided to recuse itself from, as every board member is affiliated with a local camp and it would not be fair or even feasible for a small group of individuals to decide which camps get those resources. Additionally, the international nature of the Alliance makes physical allotment of resources difficult. While we do value the physical and financial resources that are necessary to sustain our individual camps, we choose to place more emphasis on the skill and resource sharing that expand upon movement building, as we feel these are our points of strength and uniqueness. We as a board fully recognize that the intended purpose of the GRCF and its work is to benefit camps. We make this statement to publicly identify why we have many concerns about the Foundation and why we feel it is crucial to explicitly separate the two organizations.

We were first approached by the Girls Rock Camp Foundation in the fall of 2013. They said that they were interested in helping raise funds for member camps, and felt like this could best be accomplished by starting a foundation with access to public figures with both influence and connections to financial resources. At the time we were approached about the idea, the Foundation had already been put into motion and was filing for 501(c)3 status using the Girls Rock name. We were surprised to learn the process was already so far along, and disappointed that we had not been consulted during the months long conceptualization of the Foundation. We had further concerns as to whether or not a foundation tied to, but not rooted in, the girls rock camp movement was actually good for our shared work.

We also voiced concern about the foundation sharing our name, because it was subject to none of the checks and balances we adhere to within the Girls Rock Camp Alliance and we anticipated people would easily conflate the GRCA and GRCF, or expect the two to share processes, values, and organizational oversight. Furthermore, we thought that without the democratic process steering the Foundation, there was potential for decisions to be made that would undermine the reputation and movement building work the GRCA and its members have worked so diligently on for so many years. When we expressed this and other concerns, we were dismissed, and the Foundation went forward with its plans unaltered. While the GRCA board acknowledges that the processes we use for decision making can be slow in their deliberate approach so as to take into account the needs of membership and their effects on our communities, this approach made little sense to us. We believe the most effective way to raise funds for an organization would be to work in tandem with them, so as to optimize both impact and efficiency.

The GRCA board works thoughtfully and deliberately to reach decisions that we feel best reflect our entire membership of thousands of volunteers, staff, campers, allies, and communities. We are passionate about and protective of our structure and processes because we recognize that in order to make meaningful social change, the way in which we do our work must reflect the goals we hope to achieve. We believe that a rigorous, decentralized, and grassroots structure supports that effort. Because these collective values are so central to our work, we need our members, future members, and public to see those values reflected synonymously with the GRCA name. So we were concerned to see the launch of a high profile photo project and to be mentioned in several widely distributed media outlets that conflated the GRCA and GRCF

structures and objectives. The GRCA has been erroneously written up and connected to individuals, bands, and projects. Member camps and their communities have donated money to projects thinking that they are directly supporting GRCA. The messaging from the GRCF has failed to explicitly differentiate itself from the GRCA, and in doing so, has both gained legitimacy and clout from the girls rock camp movement, as well as (unwittingly or not) undermined the movement building the GRCA has accomplished.

Let us be clear that this statement is not a reflection on those supporters who have joined up through the GRCF, but rather the conception, execution and current practices of the Foundation which have proceeded in a manner that obfuscates the relationship between the GRCA and GRCF. We want our camps to have as many opportunities to raise funds as possible, and we'd like those opportunities to be accessible to all of our members should they choose to take part. We know from experience the difficult fiscal realities of running a camp, and the GRCA board works to help maximize resources for our membership. However, by ignoring our concerns and trading on our reputation, the GRCF has developed a policy of do now, ask later. The Foundation uses our graphics on their website without permission, and has asked for data on our campers and volunteers, despite having no formal relationship or dialogue with GRCA. They've taken relationships member camps have with artists and individuals and used them as their own. Further adding to the confusion, people involved in the GRCA have been part of the formation and operations of GRCF, giving the impression that the GRCA has explicitly endorsed all of the Foundation's endeavors. We are continually finding out about projects and collaborations the Foundation has undertaken only once the stories break publicly, and are attempting to give context to the history of the complicated relationship between the GRCA and the GRCF.

We still hope to find a way to collaborate with the Foundation that can help serve both of our objectives. We have asked that the Girls Rock Camp Foundation change their name multiple times so as to prevent any further confusion about the two organizations. We hope that in doing so, the integrity of the work of the GRCA will not be compromised, and the Foundation can continue in its own direction unencumbered by GRCA's organizational structures. There is no reason why the two cannot coexist, and interested camps can continue to seek funding from the Foundation if they feel it is an appropriate source. We have worked tirelessly over years and continents, and do not want to have the Girls Rock legacy be co-opted. The GRCA is deeply committed to serving and listening to all those involved in and affected by our work. We remain

hopeful that an open dialogue can begin between the two organizations, so that our membership can be best served.

We share this history to be fully transparent about process and to let membership know where we as a board currently stand. We would like to open up a dialogue with membership for next steps, and for that we have dedicated time and space at the conference in the form of a session in the GRCA movement building track, as well as a Skype call on May 1st for those unable to be at the conference. We welcome constructive thoughts, input and ideas from folks about how to best move forward from here. We hope to see you there and look forward to progressing into the next phase of this relationship together as we have always proceeded, collectively as a global movement.

Respectfully,
The GRCA Board