

**End of Summer Celebration**  
**August 25, 2020**  
**Notes from Breakout Sessions**

***Question #1: How is your chapter staying engaged right now? Are you meeting virtually, in person, not at all? What are you thinking of for the future?***

- Some chapters are increasing their meetings; some are not meeting at all.
- Some feel that Zoom is easier.
- Happy hour before the meeting to keep people coming back. Affirmation before dinner.
- Out-of-the-box meetings pre-Covid: hikes and cross country skiing in local parks for their meeting.
- Flexibility about Zoom vs. in person meeting; some want one, some want the other. Combine groups so that members have options.
- Encourage recurring donations.
- Bingo for fun at one Zoom meeting.
- Conducting discussions via Zoom feels awkward so not meeting.
- Not as comfortable with technology so not meeting.
- There was initial excitement about Zoom, but that has faded.
- Chapter has been meeting virtually each month, attendance is strong because Zoom is anytime/anywhere. Now the meeting is more regimented. Kept the same time.
- Chapter is a recurring donation chapter – no cash!
- Dining for Women is as much about connection right now as it is about the true mission/vision.
- A core group of 20 women in a chapter that has met for 7 years met on Zoom. They had good attendance. They go around "Zoom" room and give everyone 2 minutes to say something positive that has happened recently. The chapter met on Zoom twice and have resumed outdoors and have pot luck etc.

- Using Zoom, low attendance- call every member to reach out and connect; got people jazzed up, love DFW but some not wanting to Zoom. Will do a park meeting soon.
- Younger demographic, all were "Zoomed out" - doing a socially distanced meeting.
- Advocacy is virtual only so it's been great!
- Email chapter twice a month just to stay in touch.
- Meeting outside in member's backyards, socially distanced.
- Include the total amount of Chapter donations in emails to members so everyone can feel proud about that.
- Smaller groups - suggest splitting larger groups into smaller to meet in person safely.
- Meet on different days of the month rather than a scheduled week (i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday).
- Chapters are meeting socially distanced in person and via Zoom. Record the Zoom meeting and send the recording to members who missed the meeting.
- Another chapter leader has Zoom meeting icebreakers that sound fun (everyone wears a fun hat or a special piece of jewelry and talks about it).
- Planning a Zoom fundraiser with guest speakers. Winter will be virtual for most chapters as it gets colder and darker but my chapter hopes to incorporate some winter outdoor events like cross country skiing or snowshoeing for some socially distanced get togethers without shared food or drink.
- Due to Zoom Fatigue most of us had fewer people than expected.
- One chapter said most of the members were friends anyway who saw each other socially; they don't feel a need to Zoom for DFW.
- Discussed how some at-risk communities are feeling "stuck" inside, so need more time to check in, less time talking about the grantees.

- Instagram live or Facebook live - grantees on these platforms instead or in addition to Zoom, younger demographic would be interested in that and it is really easy to share.
- "Hybrid meeting" where some members were on an outside deck of a member and Zooming with others, on a Virtual meeting.
- Idea to increase donations: perhaps chapter leaders can either provide envelopes to their members, or ask members to send their checks to them so they can submit in bulk.
- Joint meetings with another chapter to up attendance.
- Attendance is down by 1/3 to 1/2, whether they are meeting virtually or in person.
- Surveyed members to see what they wanted to do.
- Launching a Facebook page.
- Thank you notes.
- Put chapters together, sometimes from other parts of the country.
- Meeting with other chapter leaders in region to share ideas.
- Will consider occasional Zoom meetings even when back to in-person dinners to combine several chapters every now and then.
- More people attending Zoom. Encourage people to bring friends from out of state!!
- One is a corporate chapter that meets at lunchtime. Now that they are all on Zoom for work, it is hard to have yet another meeting at lunchtime on Zoom.
- One is a large chapter – 41 members – and hasn't been meeting. Too hot to meet outside in their climate. No venues open to that large of a number.
- ALL MISSED dining together and the conversations around the table.
- Retired, older members are expressing a fear of the technology

- Zoom meetings are going extremely well, with 13-14 attending each time. Zoom has eradicated the routine complaints that she was constantly hearing, since south county people get annoyed about freeway time for north county meetings, and vice-versa. Also, Zoom has made it possible to have more in-depth grantee discussions. The chapter sets up a calendar where members sign up to reserve their month to be presenter. There was a problem with some members interrupting presentations in the past, and other disruptions, when meeting in living rooms. Now the grantee talks are cohesive and focused, and the presenter gets to make their presentation smoothly and thoroughly. Also, the meetings start and end on time, and they can keep to the agenda. Looking to the future, the chapter will probably go partially virtual – perhaps meet in person quarterly and Zoom on the other months, or every other month. The chapter is thriving with the virtual format.
- Because the free Zoom account allows only 40-minutes meetings, must schedule two back-to- back Zoom meetings to have enough time to get everything in (i.e. 7:00 - 7:30; 7:30-8:00). 40 minutes is not enough time
- Suggest using phones and doing Zoom outdoors for a change of scenery.
- One chapter ZOOMs every month. There are multiple chapters in their immediate vicinity, and they have always, even pre-COVID, cut attendance off at 15.
- ZOOM is a great opportunity to include women from different physical locations-friends, family members.
- Every chapter leader felt that they would continue meeting virtually.
- One chapter is holding hybrid meetings: some members in person and some on Zoom. Approximately 7 people met in-person, outside, 6 feet apart; they brought their own food. Eight people attend virtually; the virtual members are the ones at higher risk for COVID-19. Initially had some technical issues as the in-person participants were all logged into Zoom on their phones, but not on mute, so they had some substantial feedback. Now they have one computer in the front and no one logs in with the phone. Most members donate on line.
- Had attendance of 35-40 pre-COVID. Haven't been meeting since the pandemic started. The area was hit hard by COVID so members are very cautious. Encouraging online giving. The donations are down approximately 50%. May do a Zoom meeting for their 10th anniversary, but fears the chapter won't be active again until there is a vaccine.

- Most active members call in. Donations are down. No plans for in-person meetings until there is a vaccine since most members are older/high risk.
- Met in person last week. Met outside, brought their own food. It was a successful meeting.
- Sending members to the national online meetings. May start meeting.
- One chapter is not engaged but is planning on trying Zoom. Perhaps technical assistance would be helpful.
- Several CLs mentioned having difficulty with Zoom attendance and donations. Many check writers are not sending donations; they do not wish to be automatic donors.
- Enjoying the Zoom meetings so much though that even when the Covid restrictions are all removed, they plan to continue with Zoom meetings once a quarter. Referenced avoiding heavy traffic, time constraints etc. Something to keep in mind if we have bad winter weather etc.
- Those of us meeting by Zoom thought the we would avoid in person meetings at least through the end of the year. I know we have already told our members that we would be meeting virtually at least that long.
- As far as engaging members going forward, one of the things we will try is the small group breakouts like we had the other night. Our members like to socialize for a while prior to the start of our meetings, and having 20-25 people on a Zoom call makes this pretty impossible. I think breaking folks up for 5-10 minutes maybe twice before the start of the meeting would be a great idea and might prompt some others to join in the next time.

## **Question #2: How do you promote good discussions in your meetings and keep people interested and engaged?**

- Speakers with experience abroad, such as Grantees, members, local entrepreneurs, Peace Corps returnees, Speakers from our resource list

- Invite other guests/guest speakers- not just DFW but local professionals with knowledge of topic.
- Diversify meetings with
  - Husbands, younger guests/members (daughters), new members
- Alternate smaller groups with joint meetings of whole chapter (if it is large)
- Parties at holidays or other social gatherings (Zoom socials)
- Varied ages keep the discussion interesting.
- Connect with members via personal questions, ice breakers or something like “The most interesting book you’ve read this year”.
- Relating travel experiences back to the featured grantee, or realizing how vastly different your lives are yet all you still have in common.
- Many chapters are very chatty, so it’s about finding a specific aspect of the grantee you can ask about, or even a philosophical question (i.e. can you have compassion without empathy?)
- CL watches the video ahead of time and presents a few key moments that struck her.
- More mature chapter, they draw similarities between projects over time or themes.
- One member/presenter engages group by beginning with, “Imagine that you are... (details of the life of a recipient of grantee’s project) ...
- Finding a connection to the grantee’s location really helps (member’s travels, recent news, etc.).
- Members inject excellent discussion questions/answers themselves.
- Spending some social “catching up” time is important, either before or after.
- Gets members involved by printing up the questions from the website or quotes from the “in their voices” section and have members read them to the group.
- The resources from the DFW website have been very helpful.

- Email before the meeting, encouraging members to look at the information provided online about the grantee and view the video, really encourages people to do so. Like an "assignment" in a class situation, they tend to come prepared. In the case of the Zoom meeting it means it's easier for the presenter because the video isn't required as part of the Zoom meeting (another level of technology that not everyone is comfortable with).
- It's important to have folks take turns in taking responsibility for presenting the education information about each grantee. If the chapter leader does it all the time, it tends to become mundane (and just gives one more responsibility to the leader...).
- In reference to the above, some groups have folks sign up in advance to do the education portion, being very specific about the grantee in advance. That is, at least one chapter distributes a clipboard with the Months, Regions, and a bit about the grantee for the next six or so months -- members in turn sign up for the education presentation or hosting responsibilities. In that way, if a person knows a bit about the country -- has visited there or has some more in-depth knowledge about it, they can take the lead. It makes the meeting much more engaging.
- Zoom meetings tend to be more efficient -- you can get down to business much more quickly. This isn't to say there isn't any chatter, but we don't waste time talking about the antique furniture in the home we are visiting, the new addition on the back of the house, or grandma's vintage china.
- Zoom Meetings make it easier to present online because you can have all your notes in front you and you don't have to stand/sit in front of a group., etc.
- Having members host or present grows leadership and commitment. The more they engage, the more they are committed.
- Our chapter also has a lot of teachers who bring their teaching creativity to each of the presentations, by finding a speaker, using a hands-on learning experience or having members write a "found poem". Some of the learning experiences they have done in the past include: bringing in a pile of garbage for the members to pick through to see how hard it would be to make a living picking through garbage; and putting a bucket full of water on their heads to experience how hard it is to balance a bucket of water on their heads; and another time they all tried on a burka that someone brought from Afghanistan. They have found that the same teaching techniques that work for 5th graders also work for their chapter members.
- Adopt a book club approach and ask each of the members to watch the videos and read the material beforehand and come prepared for discussion.

- Come up with your own discussion questions and don't just rely on the ones provided. Take full advantage of all the links provided by DFW and go to the program's websites.
- View the video beforehand, but then use the PowerPoint on "screen share" to help everyone remember during the meeting.
- Connect the elements of the lesson to those of the lives of the members, how are they different and how similar?
- Do an activity to start the meeting- like a short quiz, identify countries on a map, etc.
- Call to remind members to come- make a personal connection.
- Keep the meeting to one hour with the lesson first and then socializing at the end.
- Encourage members to bring a snack and drink to make it more like a meeting.
- Have the presenter wear a special outfit- cape and hat- as a fun feature of the meeting.
- Share a variety of viewpoints.
- Remind members to donate online and repeat recommendation to set up recurring donation.
- Hold outside meetings, no food, and bring your own everything [chair, wine, etc.].
- Group meeting more now than they used to! More people are coming to the Zoom than show up in person. Members watch the video before the meeting, have short [free Zoom] meeting time to discuss. They are asking members to invite a friend to come to the meetings; people can be from ANYWHERE, which has turned out to be great experience.
- I think members are too polite to "verbally" ask questions yet, but they're warming up to it, and we say, if you have questions, put them in the CHAT box.
- Do pop quiz to see if folks have read about the program before the meeting and then give a prize or just give door prizes.
- Everyone is given a turn to talk, both at in-person meetings and on Zoom.
- Bring context by creating a situation the members can relate to based on the grantees— for example create the story of what if you had to evacuate because of a forest fire, and



you were sent to another country, and they spoke a different language, and you had no documents....

- Build strong personal relationships and create a “safe space” to share concerns about life in general, as well as discussing the program.
- Adequate preparation was considered a key factor.
- Focus on a ‘cohesive group’ that socializes, protests, helps each other with tasks such as moving, etc.
- Share NY Times articles by email and other sources of interesting information as it relates to the grantee’s country.
- Research the country, along with statistics on the status of women there.
- Begin meetings with a social go around. Each person gives a personal update for about 2 minutes. There’s about a minute for follow-up questions. Everyone in the group receives attention at the beginning of the meeting. The personal information enhances group cohesion, and also ‘warms up’ all the members for sharing and discussing the project information.
- Hold a mother/daughter meeting or have a mother/daughter chapter.
- Use a relevant “background” picture for her own ZOOM background.
- Open ended questions/dialogue.
- Consider socially distanced backyard gathering during this time.
- Invite representatives from DFW.
- Have a “dinner question topic” at each meeting. Tie the question into something connected to what the grantee does for women and girls. While eating dinner, each member shares her experience/answer with the group. For example: topic menstruation-each woman shared something about their experiences with menstruation; maybe how she found out about it, how old was she when she began monthly periods, etc. Another question was “who mentored you in your life?”
- Find music from the grantee’s country and at the end of each meeting, the music is played and everyone dances! Have fun!!