

## **Ontario Council Membership Challenge 2022**

### **Ideas for Recruitment and Retention**

Thank you to all the Ontario Council clubs who took part in the Ontario Council Membership Challenge, 2022. Clubs were certainly challenged during COVID but many stepped up, got creative, worked hard, and continued to recruit and retain members. All the ideas were valuable and worthy but winners were chosen in the two categories of Recruitment and Retention and each received a \$300 prize. The criteria for judging was based on following the contest directions, creativity, measurable results stated, and ease of replication by other clubs.

#### **Winners:**

**Recruitment: CFUW Peterborough-** recruited new members by organizing several outdoor activities at various local venues (holiday planter workshop at a local greenhouse, meet and greet, visit to an outdoor gallery), invited guests to each, and showed them what the club is and does to gain their interest before asking them to join.

**Retention: CFUW Cornwall-** Regular communication and celebration and recognition of members and their stories via phone calls, social media shares and posts, newsletters and virtual activities were the keys to Cornwall's success.

Some common strategy themes that emerged:

#### **1. The Personal Touch**

- Talking to and inviting friends/acquaintances to club meetings e.g. Bring a Friend Night
- Inviting friends/acquaintances to club events other than meetings e.g. advocacy events, social events, workshops, fundraisers, etc.
- Regular telephone communication to either give information or check on the member e.g. phone trees
- Buddy system to welcome and support new members
- Engaging new members in club activities immediately, even on a small scale
- Remind all members of their responsibility to help with gaining members and keeping them
- Hold an event e.g. Wine and Cheese or Meet and Greet for new members
- Recognize and engage whenever and wherever possible

#### **2. Communication**

- Have an inviting and enticing website and keep it current
- Use Facebook and Instagram and other social media to publicize events and post testimonials and other information on these sites on a regular basis
- Advertise and submit articles to print media sources in your area. These communications should publicize coming events, celebrate all events, and state the purpose and goals of the club
- Use newsletters to celebrate new and existing members

- Create a membership pamphlet or card that members can carry and have handy when they meet a prospective member
- Have interesting speakers/topics and publicize and invite the public

### 3. Creativity

- Adaptation to circumstances- getting proficient with Zoom and providing help for members to feel comfortable
- Going virtual with fundraisers
- Adapting social and fun activities to Zoom (Interest Groups)
- Adapting advocacy activities to Zoom
- Engaging scholarship winners in club activities
- Holding hybrid meetings so everyone can be accommodated
- Finding ways to interact with or partner with community events to increase public profile

In the end, having enthusiasm for CFUW’s purpose, values, and goals and for “Women Helping Women for a Better Future” and then imparting those beliefs to the women we meet will help in sustaining the organization and allow us all to move forward- together.

Name of Club	Recruitment Ideas	Retention Ideas
CFUW Aurora-Newmarket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships- members speaking to friends and acquaintances</li> <li>• Every member should consider themselves as on the Membership Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly newsletter item to tell the story of a member- her life, interests, etc. outside the club</li> </ul>
CFUW Cornwall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised community profile by participating in a cleanup event- led to club interview and publication in two local news media outlets</li> <li>• Placed lawn signs with CFUW logo on 12 scholarship recipients’ lawns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication by:</li> <li>• Facebook group for members to share posts and pictures</li> <li>• Executive members calling all members frequently to chat- “sister calls”</li> <li>• Meetings and interest groups held virtually</li> <li>• Club newsletter</li> <li>• Virtual auction for scholarship fund and charity</li> </ul>
CFUW Haliburton Highlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word of mouth- friends telling friends</li> <li>• Advertising in/on local media</li> <li>• Several meetings open to guests and the public before requiring them to join</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all new members are involved in a small interest group</li> <li>• Buddy system for new members</li> </ul>

Name of Club	Recruitment Ideas	Retention Ideas
CFUW Hamilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media with a personal touch if interest is shown</li> <li>• Offering Zoom general meetings and interest group meetings to potential members</li> <li>• Being able to offer speakers from anywhere via Zoom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending letters to those not able to join Zoom meetings summarizing activities, and club information</li> </ul>
CFUW London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Zoom meetings with registration on Eventbrite and ads on Facebook</li> <li>• Link sent to existing members</li> <li>• Keep an ongoing list of members and past members to contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send registration link directly</li> <li>• Send reminders and engage personally</li> <li>• Zoom Happy Hour monthly</li> </ul>
CFUW Muskoka		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone chats on a regular basis</li> </ul>
CFUW North Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence at local activities and events</li> <li>• Connections through awarding scholarships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacting all members personally in August and September</li> <li>• Offering interesting and varied interest groups and activities</li> </ul>
CFUW Orillia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles in the local media for each meeting ( highlighting the speaker) and for all special events and activities</li> <li>• Word of Mouth</li> <li>• Bring a Friend to a meeting event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Members Wine and Cheese</li> <li>• New members work together to arrange the June end of year Social</li> <li>• Getting new members involved in interest groups asap</li> <li>• Committee Chairs reach out to include new members if interested</li> <li>• Introduce them at their first meeting</li> <li>• All club members receive a directory with names and contact information</li> <li>• Recognize years of membership starting at 10 years</li> <li>• Phone chat lines</li> </ul>

Name of Club	Recruitment Ideas	Retention Ideas
CFUW Ottawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesigned membership pamphlet and distributed throughout local libraries and community centres</li> <li>• Published in local community newspapers and the Ottawa Citizen</li> <li>• Social Media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New members get a Welcome Package</li> <li>• Zoom Welcomes in small groups to determine their interests and provide information and follow up with a personal letter</li> <li>• Speaker topics matched with interest groups</li> <li>• Opening up the Zoom meetings to potential members</li> </ul>
CFUW Peterborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize activities (outdoor during COVID) e.g. holiday planter workshop, meet and greet, visit to an outdoor gallery, invited guests and showed them what the club is and does.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on Advocacy and the importance of involvement</li> </ul>
CFUW St. Catharines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual House and Garden Tour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For new members:</li> <li>• Personalized letter and phone call</li> <li>• Celebrated at first meeting</li> <li>• Personal gifts and online reception</li> </ul>
UWC Toronto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colourful, dynamic and informative website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve members asap and ensure they feel part of the club</li> </ul>