

Marilyn Knight, CFRE

Development Director, Major Gifts

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council



Here we have Marilyn Knight, a relatively new staff person at the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC) – which is the agency that directs all Girl Scouts activities in a 26 county area of Southeast Texas. Marilyn is a member of the agency’s fund raising team, with a special interest in developing relationships with major donors.

Marilyn brings a long resume of fund raising experience to her job at the GSSJC. After obtaining a Master’s Degree in Theater at Florida State U. (FSU), she began her career in arts administration positions, but soon moved into the development arena. She’s done development work

for numerous agencies, including the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center, Covenant House, the Houston Symphony, and the Children’s Museum. If you’ve been to the beautiful building of the Children’s Museum recently, know that Marilyn led the capital campaign that paid for that facility. Now, she’s enjoying the opportunity to be a part of a program (Girl Scouts) that works to help girls develop strong values, cope with social temptations, and enhance their self esteem.

Marilyn is a coal miner’s daughter from Kentucky. (A song comes to mind?) She picked FSU for her college work because it had a great theater program (and she had family there.) An indication of her early money sense showed when she lived and worked in Florida for a year before starting school to qualify for instate tuition. You may be surprised to learn that between her undergraduate and graduate programs at FSU, she worked as a bartender in a disco in Daytona Beach. (I’ll bet she didn’t put that on her resume for the Girl Scouts..)

This former bartender says she’s really a very boring person. She feels blessed to have lived a life so far that has been free of major obstacles. She’s doesn’t dwell much on the distant future, preferring to live in the moment and to demonstrate compassion, empathy, integrity, and humor in all her relationships. Fund raising is a lot like selling – both involve persuading a person to spend money on something they didn’t realize they needed. So it’s not surprising that if she could have any talent or skill, it would be the ability to be totally persuasive and articulate. Judging from her experience, one cannot help but conclude that she’s already pretty good in that area.

For fun, Marilyn likes to read, to hike, and to spend time with her friends. Her love for community service led her to Rotary. She’s been in the Rotary Club of Houston for about three years, having been invited by her old boss, Bill Teague. She enjoys the inspiring and educational programs, and the opportunities for community service. So far, she’s worked with the Burnett Bayland Committee and the DCA Committee, and helped with scholarship judging and the East End immunization program.

Marilyn may seem a little quiet and shy to you – but it doesn’t take much scratching beneath the surface to find a strong, capable, confident, and caring woman. I’ve watched her interact with her staff, and I can tell you, she knows her stuff. So, get to know her! You won’t be disappointed.