

SLSA Club of the Year: North Haven Surf Life Saving Club's Transformation



1 Introduction and Background

- **Presenter:** Alex introduced Glenn Gallagher, Past President of North Haven Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) in South Australia.
- **Focus:** The club's journey from declining membership to being named the **2024 National Club of the Year**.

2 Challenges and Initial Steps

- **Membership Decline:** Faced a significant reduction in active members.
- **Rigid Patrol Requirements:** Strict patrolling schedules that were challenging for members with professional commitments.
- **Solution:** Implemented flexible patrolling options to accommodate professionals, including first responders.

3 Strategic Plan

A three-year roadmap was developed to revitalize the club:

- **Year 1:** Focus on increasing membership.
- **Year 2: Invest in youth programs and the Nippers initiative.**
- **Year 3:** Support and develop lifesavers and award holders.

4 Community Engagement

- **Events Organized:**
 - Fire and Y nights.
 - Laser tag sessions.
 - Cultural celebrations, including Diwali and Ramadan.
- **Outcome:** These initiatives attracted social members and strengthened community ties.

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Inclusivity and Diversity

- **Recruitment Campaigns:** Targeted non-swimmers and professionals with valuable skills.
- **Community Outreach:** Engaged First Nations and multicultural communities to foster inclusivity.

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Support from Other Clubs

- **Collaboration:** Received assistance and resources from neighboring clubs, which was instrumental in overcoming challenges.

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Youth Engagement and Employment

- **Innovative Approach:** Offered employment opportunities to youth members at the club's café.
- Provided a safe working environment for neurodivergent members.
- Encouraged responsibility and a sense of belonging among young members.

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Current Status and Future Plans

- **Membership Stability:** Maintained steady membership numbers.
- **Ongoing Commitment:**
 - Support the club's activities from the sidelines.
 - Encourage youth participation in competitions and leadership roles.

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Key Takeaways

- Flexibility in operations is crucial for accommodating diverse member needs.
- Leveraging community diversity enhances club culture and engagement.
- Innovative youth programs are vital for retention and development.
- Collaboration with neighboring clubs fosters mutual growth and resource sharing.

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Follow-Up Tasks

1. **Community Engagement:** Organize non-traditional surf lifesaving events, such as laser tag and cultural festivals, to attract new members.
2. **Membership Growth:** Consider waiving training fees for first responders and paramedics to encourage their participation.
3. **Youth Involvement:** Expand job opportunities at the club's café for youth members to enhance engagement.
4. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Maintain First Nations-friendly practices by preserving cultural markers and safe spaces.
5. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Engage with diverse communities through tailored events to foster a multicultural environment.

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Conclusion

Glenn Gallagher's insights highlight the importance of innovative thinking, community engagement, and inclusivity in achieving organizational success. North Haven SLSC's transformation serves as an exemplary model for other clubs aiming for revitalization and growth.

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