

Students for a Creative Iowa
Executive Summary of 2010-11 Season

The past season continued a trend of creative problem solving as we tried to do more with less; fewer teams, fewer volunteers, and of course less money. And in true DI fashion, these challenges were overcome to provide a high quality experience for the hundreds of adults and kids who took part in the Destination Imagination program this year.

Cre8iowa Committee Summaries

Financial:

- The cost cutting measures taken in the 09-10 season kept us in good standing this year.
- Moving from a two region system to a sub-state tournament allowed us to further shrink our budget while expanding rebate opportunities to Challenge Masters for the room costs they incur as part of their responsibilities.
- The working budget process allowed us to maintain a handle on our operating costs with the result that we once again finished 'in the black' for the year.

Board Committees:

- A new position was created this year, Publicity and Marketing Director, whose responsibilities include getting the word out about cre8iowa and DI, helping with new team recruitment, and exploring and writing grant proposals to officially start the fall of 2011.
- The Iowa American Legion once again awarded us with a generous grant which will be used to cover participant award costs.
 - o It was wonderful to have a Legion representative at the State Tournament to hand out awards and share the excitement of the kids.
- Scholarship Donations dropped this year, but the fund balance is very healthy and the amount of each was increased to \$500.

Sales and Pin DIsigns:

- This continues to be a success story for us.
- Once again State Pins 'sold out' at Global Finals and there was little inventory carryover at the end of the year.
- State Pin/Shirt design contest was moved to start during the tournament season while everyone was still in full DI 'mode'. Voting was left open till the fall and a large number of design ideas were submitted.

Conference:

- ITAG remains our only Conference presence.

DIHQ and BoT Summary

- The construction challenge was integrated into Challenge A.
- The Challenge Quality Control Committee, made up of HQ and Destination Imagination Affiliate Directors (DIAD) members, went through its first review process on challenges that will be launched in 2012-13.
- The new CEO, Chuck Cadle, received his first formal review

- DII Staff:
 - o Several staff members, including President Rusty McCarty and Development Coordinator Peggy Middendorf, left the organization. Affiliate Coordinator Ginger Green's position was also eliminated.
 - o A new Marketing firm was hired to improve DI 'brand' awareness.
 - o DII hired a new staff member, Heather Gaskins, as the Director of Institutional Advancement and Resource Development.
- Perhaps most importantly to cre8iowa, after a yearlong series of committee meetings, a new Affiliate License Agreement was created in draft form and presented to DIAD over the summer.
- Global Finals was successful again this year.
- Unfortunately, some of the DII's largest sponsors showed signs of perhaps ending their relationship with Destination Imagination. Such losses of support would affect both DIHQ and cre8iowa in terms of lost revenue.

Cre8iowa Board Summary

- Recruitment of new Board of Director members is once again a top priority as the number of board members has shrunk in recent years. Representation is especially needed from the western half of the state, where a majority of our teams are located. Please contact us (cre8iowa@gmail.com) if you or someone you know is interested in learning more about joining the board.
- Updates were made to the by-laws and other legal documents as recommended by legal council and the board adopted the Iowa Principles and Practices for
- Charitable Nonprofit Excellence as the principles and practices by which we operate our organization.
- DIHQ also required volunteer code of conduct forms to be signed by everyone involved in the program. Liability notices were also placed on tournament programs for insurance purposes.
- Our website was significantly expanded to include a host of material aimed at making creating and managing a team easier and more productive.
- Team Manager training remains a challenge and new ways of providing this basic information through the internet are being developed so that face-to-face meetings can focus on more advanced, competition driven, material.

Tournament Summary

- A major change from a regional system to a sub-state system was made this year and seemed to be well received by both kids and volunteers.
- Recruitment of Co-Challenge Masters remains a priority going forward and some progress appears to be happening on that front, due to the fact that our Challenge Masters are currently overworked.
- We are also looking for more 'friends of cre8iowa'. These volunteers have no team affiliation and can fill in wherever needed. Ways of recruiting these volunteers more systematically is under development.

Reflections:

Like almost everyone else in this economic climate, our two greatest challenges remain time and money. Team memberships continue to drop as districts face 0% allowable growth in state funding and families are forced to tighten their belts. As mentioned earlier, this creates a ripple effect which threatens the quality of our events and the opportunity of Iowa students to develop the creative problem solving skills they'll need to succeed in the 21st century. The potential loss of sponsorship at the corporate level means that we are in the future going to be even more 'on our own' when it comes to maintaining and growing our organization. It will take all of us, and others we haven't identified yet, to overcome these challenges, but I believe we can do it. After all, creatively solving problems is what we do!

Respectfully submitted by,

Jay Swords
Affiliate Director
Students for a Creative Iowa