

5-2021

Wonderfully Made in the Making: A Strategic Recommendation for Growth Opportunities

Kayley Scott
kayleyscott@unomaha.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/university_honors_program

 Part of the [Business Analytics Commons](#), and the [Nonprofit Administration and Management Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Scott, Kayley, "Wonderfully Made in the Making: A Strategic Recommendation for Growth Opportunities" (2021). *Theses/Capstones/Creative Projects*. 132.
https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/university_honors_program/132

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the University Honors Program at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses/Capstones/Creative Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.



Wonderfully Made in the Making:
A Strategic Recommendation for Growth Opportunities

May 7th, 2021

Kayley Scott

University of Nebraska Omaha

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Analysis	4
Internal Highlights	4
Board Members	5
Participating Girls	5
Current Programming	5
External Highlights	6
Autism Research	6
Omaha Nonprofits	6
Problem Identification	7
Recommendation	7
Implementation	7
Conclusion	9
References	10
Appendix A	11
Appendix B	12
Appendix C	13
Appendix D	14
Appendix E	15

Executive Summary

I was partnered with a local non-profit organization, called Wonderfully Made, to identify and solve a strategic problem they are experiencing. Wonderfully Made is focused on serving girls of color with special needs. I analyzed internal resources and weaknesses and I researched external factors that affect them. I found that Wonderfully Made needed to explore growth opportunities through a strategic alliance with a college organization, ideally an NPHC sorority at UNO. This would create a mentorship opportunity for the participants in the organization. It would also create growth with minimal time and resources needed from Wonderfully Made's busy board. If a strategic alliance is utilized correctly, both organizations would benefit from the connection and Wonderfully Made could better serve their members.

Introduction

Wonderfully Made is a local non-profit organization with a mission of empowering girls of color with special needs (see Appendix A for full mission statement). It was started in Fall of 2019 by Misti Mitchell. She has a daughter with autism and was frustrated by the diagnostic process and the lack of research for young girls and people of color with autism. Her response was to start Wonderfully Made.

It is my job, through this project, to research and identify Wonderfully Made's strategic problem and a corresponding solution. To do this, I started with research. First, I analyzed Wonderfully Made's website and facebook page. Then, I interviewed Mitchell numerous times to get an understanding of the internal structure of the organization. I also researched external factors such as Autism research and the Omaha non-profit community. After this research, I compiled this information, identified the problem and created a recommendation and an implementation plan.

Analysis

Internal Highlights

My research started with Wonderfully Made's online presence. They have a website, wonderfullymadeusa.org, and a facebook page. For a small, and relatively new, organization, it has a solid 300 followers on its facebook page. The page is used to announce upcoming events and spread awareness about the organization.

Next, I met and interviewed Misti Mitchell, the founder of Wonderfully Made. It is important to note, for the purposes of this paper, that she currently works full-time for a different non-profit, in addition to raising her daughter. This means she has the passion and the non-profit experience to run this organization, but also has a limited amount of time to

dedicate to it. She currently runs the organization with the help of a newly instated board.

Board Members

The board consists of five members with varying backgrounds and experiences. Between the five members, there is plenty of teaching/education experience with both kids and special needs students. There are also board members with autism or autistic children, providing first-hand experience and knowledge to help the girls in this program. However, another important highlight of the board members is that they are all either employed full-time, parents, or both. This means that while all the board members care about Wonderfully Made and are invested in the organization's success, they also have other priorities and time consuming obligations. (See Appendix B for full RBV and VRIO charts)

Participating Girls

The next essential part of Wonderfully Made is the girls it is serving. There are currently nine of them, with their ages ranging from six to 24 (see Appendix C). Each girl is a person of color and has some sort of special needs (see Appendix A for special needs description). Through the interview, Mitchell described each girl's interests and aspirations. It is a common goal of these girls to become entrepreneurs and business owners, whether it be a nail salon, fashion brand, or ice cream shop.

Current Programming

Wonderfully Made's current programming is a regular weekly meeting for the members. These meetings have different themes and activities planned for each one. For example, the April schedule consists of a spring check-in, perfume making, a fashion night, and a baking session. The girls hang-out, talk, and do the activity, allowing them to create a

community with each other. There were also specialized discussion/education meetings for Black History Month and Women's History Month. These sessions are mainly facilitated by Mitchell, but some are led by a community member. The baking session planned for April will be run by Mrs. Que, a friend of the organization.

External Highlights

My external research was mainly focused on two areas, the social perception and research of autistic girls of color, and the Omaha autism/special needs non-profit community.

Autism Research

When it comes to autism research, it is often debated if race should be considered (Burkett, 2020). Some argue that race does not play a role in autism, the behaviors, or effective therapies. However, others argue that someone's race and their experience directly affects how their autism affects them. Currently, one side is winning the debate, with the majority of autism studies not asking the participants for their race or reporting it in their findings (see Appendix D).

Omaha Nonprofits

Omaha is lucky enough to have around 600 nonprofits focused on benefiting the community, focusing on a multitude of causes (*Find & Fund Good*). For the purpose of this paper, it is important to note that while there are organizations focused on autism or special needs and organizations focused on girls of color, Wonderfully Made is the only organization focused specifically on girls of color with special needs.

Finally, it would be remiss to not mention the most obvious external factor affecting Wonderfully Made: COVID-19. COVID caused the weekly programs to be made virtual for

the safety of the girls. Obviously, COVID and the response needed is unpredictable, so it is unknown how or if it will affect the organization in the future, but with zoom, the meetings are still able to happen and attendance has remained the same as it was pre-COVID.

In summary, we know that Wonderfully Made has the passion and knowledge to support these girls and a nonprofit community to rely on, but they are limited by the time/resources, COVID, and lack of autism research (See appendix E for full SWOT chart).

Problem Identification

Based on all of the previous research and analysis, Wonderfully Made's current strategic issue is how to create growth and what that growth should look like.

Recommendation

The recommendation for Wonderfully Made to create growth is to utilize a strategic alliance to create a mentorship program for participating girls. A mentorship program would continue to grow the support system that Wonderfully Made is trying to create. It would allow the girls to gain connections in the community and real world experiences that would help propel them into their lives and future careers. Additionally, Wonderfully Made is currently limited by the time and effort the board is able to contribute. This program would create more opportunities for its members, but not require the board to bear huge amounts of responsibility and time commitments. The partnering organization would take on more of the time consuming aspects of actually working with the girls one-on-one. This would maximize the benefits the girls receive from Wonderfully Made, without over-extending their limited resources.

Implementation

I recommend the alliance to be with a college organization at the University of

Nebraska-Omaha. UNO is local and community focused, making them open to collaboration with a local non-profit. Additionally, it would provide the girls a first-hand experience with a college they might consider attending.

As for the specific organization, I recommend pursuing a partnership with NPHC sororities on campus. The National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) is made up of nine historically African-American greek fraternities and sororities. UNO currently has seven NPHC chapters; four of which are sororities. The NPHC sororities are already focused on the empowerment of girls of color, since they are a group of black, collegiate women. So there is a clear commonality between their missions and Wonderfully Made. Additionally, NPHC mission expects their organizations to develop “social programs that would create positive change for Blacks and the country” (*About the NPHC*). This means a partnered mentorship between the two organizations would be mutually beneficial. The girls of Wonderfully Made will have excellent collegiate black women to look up to and connect with, showing them that, as black girls they can not only go to college, but also flourish and find a community. NPHC then fulfills their goal of supporting the black community through the empowerment of these young girls.

One potential issue that may arise in this partnership is the size of NPHC sororities. NPHC sororities do not actively try to recruit members. Instead, potential members are supposed to do their own research and express interest, which starts the recruitment process. This leads to much smaller sororities than what you see in NPC sororities, which are more commonly displayed in media. Some NPHC sororities only have one to three members. This means it would be a large undertaking for a single NPHC sorority to mentor the nine girls in Wonderfully Made. Luckily, because of this issue, NPHC sororities already

often do things as NHPC, instead of each of the separate sororities. Therefore, if Wonderfully Made pursues a mentorship with NHPC as a whole, there should be enough members and resources combined to create the mentorship program.

Conclusion

Wonderfully Made is a great organization, fueled by a mothers love and passion for her child to know she can do anything she sets her mind to. The organization is new and small, which limits its capabilities. However, a strategic alliance would allow Wonderfully Made to further serve and empower its girls. No one should be limited by their gender, color of their skin, or a developmental diagnosis, and Wonderfully Made is making sure these girls know that.

References

About the NPHC. National Pan-Hellenic Council. (n.d.).

<https://nphcq.com/millennium1/about/>.

Burkett, C. (2020, January 20). 'Autistic while black': How AUTISM amplifies stereotypes.

Retrieved March 26, 2021, from <https://www.spectrumnews.org/opinion/viewpoint/autistic-while-black-how-autism-amplifies-stereotypes/>

Christie, D. (2020, June 11). Kantar: Consumers want brands to take stance on social issues,

but demographic divides remain. Retrieved March 26, 2021, from

<https://www.marketingdive.com/news/kantar-consumers-want-brands-to-take-stance-on-social-issues-but-demograp/579618/>

Find & Fund Good. SHARE Omaha. (n.d.).

<https://shareomaha.org/search/nonprofits/who/kids/causes/autism>.

Rothaermel, F. T. (2021). *Strategic Management* (5th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

Wonderfully Made USA. (n.d.). <https://www.wonderfullymadeusa.org/>.

Wonderfully Made USA. (n.d.). In *Facebook* [Facebook page]. Retrieved April 29, 2021, from

<https://www.facebook.com/WonderfullyMadeUSA>

Appendix A

Wonderfully Made's mission statement

“Our mission is to empower creative minds in the lives of girls of color with special needs. Girls of color with special needs have three specific components to their identity which oppress them in opportunities: the color of their skin, gender and a learning or developmental diagnosis that classifies them as special needs. These young ladies are more often told what they cannot do, rather than given the encouragement and support needed to embrace their uniqueness, find their skillset and build confidence in who they are, a true gift to this world.”

What is special needs?

Any of various difficulties (such as physical, emotional, behavioral or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialized services or accommodations (such as in education or recreation).

Wonderfully Made USA's Goals

- to help girls better understand themselves
- to help girls understand the importance of their voice being heard
- to empower girls to see the gift of their uniqueness
- to build confidence in their diagnosis and help them transcend it
- to identify their skillset and present them with opportunities and career options

Appendix B

Resource Based Value Chart

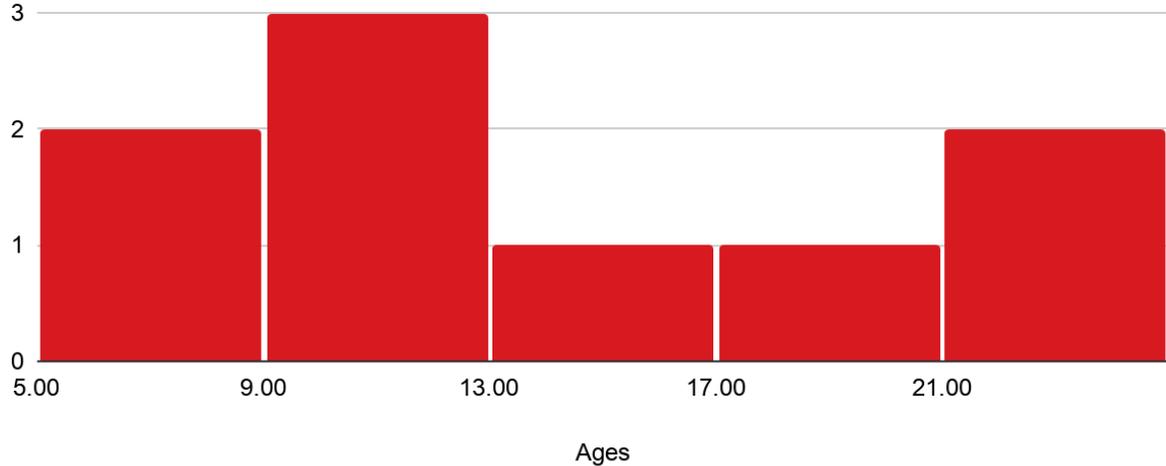
Resource/Capability	Strength or Weakness?	Impact
Board knowledge, experience, passion	Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows how to best serve the girls • Passion and love reflected in work
Board having other jobs/responsibility	Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits time and energy available for wonderfully made
Omaha community members	Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement from the surrounding community can provide resources and support (ex. Mrs. Que)

VRIO chart

Resource/Capability	Valuable?	Rare?	Imitable?	Organized ?	Competitive Outcome
Board knowledge, experience, passion	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Temporary Competitive Advantage
Board having other jobs/responsibility	No	-	-	-	Competitive Disadvantage
Omaha nonprofit community	Yes	No	-	-	Competitive Parity

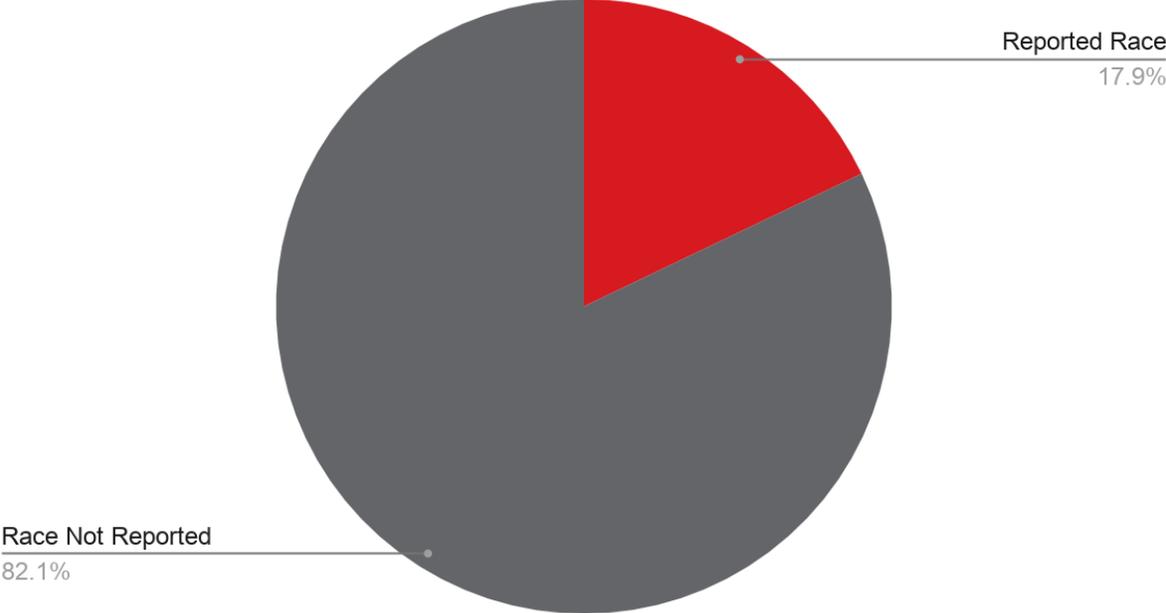
Appendix C

Histogram of Ages



Appendix D

Race Reporting in Autism Studies



Statistics from (Burkett, 2020)

Appendix E

SWOT Chart

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-profit experience• Passion/knowledge for special needs children• Supporting community members	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited resources (money, people, time)
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media• Local organizations	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Covid• Lack of available research