Girls Who Handle It:
Transforming the Lives of College-Aged Women.

A Senior Project presented to The Faculty of the Journalism Department California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of Science in Journalism

By
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Abstract

Girls Who Handle It (GWHI) is an organization unique to San Luis Obispo, but hoping to expand in the coming years. The team recruited myself to begin the process of expansion beginning in Santa Barbara. Despite the success in San Luis Obispo, the lack of previous recognition in this new city proved to be a difficulty in executing this event.

GWHI aims to create a community empowerment movement by allowing college aged women to share their vulnerabilities on a public platform creating conversation surrounding difficulty. They also highlight the role social media plays in hiding these trials by often not accurately displaying an individual’s actual existence.

This experience was difficult and gave me real-world experience on how to handle an event touching on a sensitive topic. Additionally, I learned the fundamentals of essentially starting from the ground up to create a successful event with the necessary marketing, public relations and publicity to get it there.
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Identify Client

Girls Who Handle It
girlswohandleit@gmail.com
793 Higuera St
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Asia Croson, Founder and CEO
(805) 888-7448

Julia Freet, Founder and CEO
(925) 300-7645

Madi Leber, Event Coordinator and Board of Directors
(916) 316-8049

The client’s history:

- Beginning in Spring 2017, Girls Who Handle It (GWHI) sought to change the way college aged women viewed mental health. Freet approached Croson because of her involvement in the San Luis Obispo (SLO) community. As a prominent and well known photographer in SLO, Croson had a vast network of college women who would be immediately impacted by the movement Freet sought to create.

What kind of products and services does this company or nonprofit organization provide? Of these, which is it best known for?

- The project Girls Who Handle It is an art exhibit event where attendees will read stories & see photos of young women who are dealing with unbelievable difficulties that most people do not ever know about, and are managing these issues with remarkable resilience. This project is about increasing the level of public vulnerability and advocate for a community of honest sharing and acceptance amongst women, specifically in contrast to what is portrayed on their social media profiles. In doing so, Girls Who Handle It is a platform where members of the community are provided with an opportunity to confront the pervasive norms of social media by directly addressing the issues these norms mandate that we hide.

- Along with the exhibit, GWHI connects the young women involved with one another providing them with a support system before, during and after the event. Additionally, they have begun a mentor program where women who have participated in the event previously can mentor the girls who are going through the current program.

How is the company organized in terms of management and leadership?

- Croson and Freet jointly lead the organization. As Founders and CEOs, the pair have built GWHI from the ground up. They meet weekly with the team to allocate tasks and recap on all that has developed since they have last met.

Is the company privately held or publicly held?
GWHI is a privately held business at the moment that is currently moving forward to becoming a recognized non-profit organization.

What is the competitive environment?
- Because GWHI is a non-profit there is not a competitive atmosphere surrounding the organization. There are however, many organizations that place a premium supporting young women. GWHI gives a unique perspective though by involving the impact of social media.

Does the company have a mission statement or an organizational philosophy?
- GWHI’s mission is to start a movement around mental health and the impacts social media has on it. In many ways, social media stifles the voice or hardship it’s users are going through. Often times, individuals do not share their struggles on social media and present a life that is not actually realistic or representative of the true circumstances they find themselves in.

Their vision:
- To start a community empowerment movement to recognize and share personal struggles.

Their values:
- Transparency, support, acceptance and the ability to be open about an individual’s true circumstances.

Perceived Needs of Company:
- With the founders’ reputability in SLO, it was easy for the first to events to build a campaign and be recognized in the community. Both individuals are well known and have many connections within Cal Poly as well as the SLO community. Branching outside of SLO and going to Santa Barbara presented a new challenge for GWHI. Going into a community where there was no trust or relationship between it and GWHI presented a difficulty in not only the publicity but also the participants sharing their most vulnerable experiences.

Perceived Publics:
- The publics we recognized with this campaign were the Santa Barbara community as a whole and the college aged women we were reaching out to for participation.

Perceived Needs of Publics:
- We needed the community to support this movement and attend the event. Because GWHI is a non-profit and completely supported by donation, community recognition was crucial to the events success but also future events funding. With the mission also to create a community empowerment movement that not only impacts the participants, GWHI wanted Santa Barbara constituents to find a passion and interest in the event as a whole.
- For the participants, they needed to trust GWHI with their stories. Because GWHI is focused on sharing one’s deepest vulnerabilities, it was important that the women felt comfortable sharing their stories and felt supported by the organization. We also had to be sure the girls were ready to share their stories and would feel protected in the process.
Outcome from initial interview:
- The initial interview outlined the important objectives that would need to be fulfilled by a Public Relations intern and campaign. The organization needed someone to help with answering event questions surrounding diversity and gender and also create a strategy for penetrating the Santa Barbara community.

Foreseeable complications if problems are not solved:
- If the community was not reached effectively, the outcome of the event would not reach the level of recognition that is desired. Additionally, maintaining a positive image by the public is important as GWHI is a new organization that is still establishing its roots.

Media Channels used by Client:
- GWHI utilizes social media to promote the organization. They recognize the humor of using social media while also maintaining the message that social media impacts mental health. However, because this is the most used avenue of the organization's general demographic, this is determined to be the best way to reach individuals.

Website:
- girlswhohandleit.com

Social Media:
- Instagram: girlswhohandleit
- Facebook: Girls Who Handle It
Needs Assessment

Client Interview:
- After my initial interview with GWHI, I was able to hone in more specifically on what they were looking for and the outcome they wanted from a PR campaign.

Strengths:
- The passion of the individuals who run the organization is powerful and contagious.
- After having two successful events with over 1,000 attendees, they have a strong track record.
- Sorority relations at Cal Poly can bridge the gap between SLO and Santa Barbara

Opportunities:
- Santa Barbara is untouched and does not have an organization like GWHI which gives them an open platform for reaching the community.
- With a high number of college aged women, Santa Barbara is a prime location for GWHI.

Weaknesses:
- There are no ties to the city as a whole with the organization.
- Funds are limited and the distance makes it difficult to plan and meet the participants.
- Communicating via social media and text is difficult when building relationships with the participants.

Threats:
- The distance could leave the organization feeling disconnected to the participants and city.
- The lack of diversity in both cities leaves GWHI vulnerable to attack by those looking for more diverse groups.
- Branding themselves only for girls can be difficult in today’s gender and sex debate because it could be seen as discriminatory.

Media Sources:
- I would like to use social media in order to get on the community’s radar, create awareness of both the organization itself as well as its upcoming event through posting on social media sites such as Instagram and Facebook. At the events there will be a photographer who will create memories for the participants and the community that can be sent out to promote the event following its completion.
- We will also institute a social media flood the day before the event for the participants to inform their communities of the event. With the signature “GWHI Photo”, the girls will post details on the location and when it will be to encourage attendance.

Identify Demographic Groups:
- Santa Barbara constituents
- College aged women
Research Objectives:

- **Consumer Habits and Purchasing Decisions:**
  - The Santa Barbara community is generally well off and focused on the arts and well being. This is an excellent community for the organization to gain backing and support.
  - Participants are not required to pay anything for the event.

- **Media Habits:**
  - By utilizing Facebook and Instagram, both demographics of adults and young adults can be reached. This event is more specifically targeted at students though. One study, from the Huffington Post, states that 98% of college students use social media sites. In addition, in an annual nationwide survey of college students by UCLA it was found that 27.2% of students spent more than six hours on social media a week in 2014, up from 19.9% percent in 2007.

- **Existing Knowledge:**
  - Very few Santa Barbara constituents are aware of this non-profit organization. However, I believe with proper publicity a large quantity of students could be reached out too.

- **Attitudes, Beliefs, Judgements:**
  - I think Santa Barbara constituents would feel very passionate towards this cause and would want to attend the event and donate. I also think the college students would want to donate and since the event does not require a set donation amount and they will want to come support their friends.

Qualitative Research:

- **Focus groups:**
  - There have been no focus groups done for this campaign. However, the success of the past two events in Slo give me an optimistic mindset of the event’s potential.

- **Field Observation:**
  - My observation is that the GWHI campaign will be successful in Santa Barbara with an increased social media presence. After more people are informed there will be substantial interest and growth in our campaign’s recognition overall.

Quantitative Research:

- **Survey research:**
  - We are not conducting a survey but we will be able to know exactly who attends the event and the overall success by counting the amount of Venmos we get at the event, along with tracking our overall traffic on our multiple social media accounts.
Public Relations Campaign

Situation:
- Girls Who Handle It is an organization actively seeking non-profit status while being run by three women. Each individual has other commitments – one is a student and the others both have their own individual businesses. With the new goal to expand from their success in San Luis Obispo, they will need significant help in strategy and manpower to penetrate this new community in Santa Barbara. Because the organization is based an hour and a half away, this will also pose a disadvantage for the event because the timeline must be accurate as last minute trips and problems will be difficult to solve. GWHI needs to increase their media presence and create other tactics to utilize any connections they have in the new city and community.

Goal:
- The goal is to have around 40 college aged women participate in the event. Additionally, we want to do this event for the lowest price possible because funds are limited. This includes reaching out to local business and schools to find an event space as well as donations for the participants. We want to leave Santa Barbara remembering this event and making an impact on the community.

Objectives:
- Informational Objective:
  - We want to increase awareness of GWHI so there will be higher attendance at the event. High attendance will likely lead to more donations and increased awareness of our mission and vision.

- Motivational Objective:
  - As a result of an increase in awareness amongst the Santa Barbara community we hope the mission of the company creates an open atmosphere for recognition of mental health. We also hope there is success in this event and that we can come back for future events in the community. This event is also important in determining future steps to expanding GWHI outside of the Central Coast.

Audience:
- Our audience includes donors and participants of the GWHI event. We are trying to reach people who will attend the event and those who will share their difficult experiences, while also build a stronger support base for the organization.

Strategy:
- We are reaching out to multiple Santa Barbara college news agencies that will hopefully advertise the event and gain community recognition before the event. Additionally, we are reaching out to Greek Life and clubs on the UCSB and Westmont campuses to volunteer and participate at the event to support the success.
Increasing our media presence is the key to reaching the community that has not otherwise heard of the organization. Not only does it increase donations and support, but reaches out to college aged women to share their experience in a cathartic way.

Key Messages / Themes:
- Messages: Audience members will remember the impact GWHI has on the participants as well as the community by creating a platform of transparency. Our campaign highlights the need for transparency in social media and how we can support those going through difficult situations and thus encourage others to be active in the organization in the future.
- Themes: All of our audiences can relate to the theme of this campaign; supporting those in their lives who have been faced with trials and mental illness.

Tactics:
- GWHI Santa Barbara
  - Recruit participants
  - Solidify venue and date
  - Secure vendors and volunteers
  - Increase presence in the city of Santa Barbara

Calendar / Timetable:

January 28th: 39 days until event
- SPEAK AT LOTS OF SORORITY MEETINGS

January 31st: 36 days until event
- VENUE BOOKED (goal)
  - Make sure venue has good wifi
- Reach out to local vendors to donate services/time
- Reach out to local restaurants/stores to do fundraisers

February 1st: 35 days until event
- Post more reminders on all GWHI Team member’s social media to remind UCSB girls to apply

February 2nd: 34 days until event
- APPLICATION CLOSES

February 3rd: 33 days until event
- Send acceptance email
- Send waitlist email
- Create Facebook Group for GWHI 3
- Add GWHI 3 girls to GWHI Always Facebook group
February 6th: 30 days until event
- (Morning) Deadline to book photo time slot with Asia
- Create Groupme for GWHI 3
- Have GWHI 1&2 mentors matched up with GWHI 3 girls

February 7th: 29 days until event
- PHOTO DAY FOR EVERYONE
- Send out story writing email
- Confirm list of venue’s supplies (Tables, chairs, ladder, level)

February 10th: 26 days until event

February 15th: 21 days until event
- Makeup & Hair donors booked
- Write Press Release
- Secure Shirt and/or Sticker merchandise

February 16th: 20 days until event
- All event supplies ordered (Matte boards, command strips, etc.)
- Finalize fundraiser details

February 18th: 18 days until event
- Reach out to potential greeters

February 19th: 17 days until event
- Order shirts & merchandise

February 20th: 16 days until event
- Release volunteer form for UCSB volunteer

February 22nd: 14 days until event
- STORIES & SCREENSHOTS DUE

February 25th: 11 days until event
- ACTUAL HARD STORY & SCREENSHOT DEADLINE

February 26th: 10 days until event
- Decide on & design event signage
- Start advertising ticket sales on social media

February 27th: 9 days until event
- Send Makeup & Hair Sign Up spreadsheet to GWHI 3

February 28th: 8 days until event
- All stories formatted & proofread

March 1st: 7 days until event
- All GWHI 3 Instagram screenshots formatted correctly
- Send event schedule, details, parking info, location directions to photographer

March 2nd: 6 days until event
- Send all girls their GWHI photo & Instagram flood instructions

March 3rd: 5 days until event
- All GWHI 3 photos printed
- All GWHI 3 stories printed
- All GWHI 3 Instagram screenshots printed
- Come up with packing list for Day-Of event

March 4th: 4 days until event
- INSTAGRAM FLOOD
- Asia & Julia arrive in SB
- INSTAGRAM LIVE
- Come up with list of volunteers to do/division of tasks for all volunteer days
- Heavily advertise ticket sales (presale price will go up at the door)

March 5th: 3 days until event
- UCSB VOLUNTEER DAY #1
  - Put together display columns
- Create & finalize the Snapchat GeoTag

March 6th: 2 days until event
- UCSB VOLUNTEER DAY #2
  - Put together display columns

March 7th: 1 day until event
- GWHI 3 DINNER
- ALL GIRLS SIGN AGREEMENT
- Jordan & Maddie arrive in SB
- Come up with task lists & timeline for Event Day

March 8th: 0 days until event
- EVENT DAY
- Set Up Crew
- Clean Up Crew
- Greeters arrive 30 minutes early

Budget:
- Our budget varies for the event. The maximum we want to pay for housing is $500 and for the venue we would like a donation. The supplies for the event displays will be recycled from previous events. Gas money will also be given for the commute with an expected amount of $150.

Evaluation:
- We will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of our PR campaign by tracking donations on Venmo and by the number of people who are in attendance at the event as well as participating.
PR Campaign Implementation

Media Relations:
• We were contacted by several media groups during the early stages of our event planning. We also found out we had been published in the Westmont newspaper as well. Below is the contact information for the media groups.

Media list & Contacts:
• horizon@westmont.edu
• content@bottomlineucsb.com

Marketing Activities:
• We posted consistently on Instagram to promote the event in Santa Barbara. We really wanted to ensure the event was well publicized and we reached all the audiences we needed to. We encouraged the girls who were participating as well to post and share with their friends, family and communities as well. Additionally, by going to several sorority and club meetings, we were able to show face and build a bond with the community prior to receiving applications.

Event Activities:
• The whole GWHI team collaborated and did their part in ensuring the event got proper marketing as well as exceeded the goals and expectations we had set for ourselves. This event included hands on set-up and tear down the day of the event, as well as prior travel and marketing work.

Post-event Activities:
• The goal of GWHI is not just to share the young women’s stories, but to also support them through and after the event. We set the girls up with mentors so they don’t go through this alone, but also to talk to following the event. We also set up events down the road to meet up and continue to build relationships. We also encouraged the women, since they live closer to one another than we did to them, to continue to set up meetings and hang outs in Santa Barbara on their own time.

Preparing for Crisis Communications:
• The lack of awareness of the event as a whole
• Lack of diversity in the event?
• Why the focus on men only?

Strategy:
• First to engage the women in Santa Barbara
• Plan the logistics based on interest and participation rates
• Execute the marketing strategy and timeline
• Frequently remind the participants and community of the upcoming event/deadlines
• Set up work day prior to event to make sure all displays are prepped and ready for the event
• Keep track of the number of attendees and donations
• Share pictures following the event to continue the publicity of GWHI in Santa Barbara

Task List:
• Adjust questionnaire
  ○ Reduce risk of people dropping out
  ○ Edit form description
• Testimonials email to GWHI1 & 2
• Pulling Testimonials from Instagram
• Gather FAQ diversity questions
• Compile good verbiage
• Go and No words edit
• Putting together UCSB campus organizations contact list
• Update Highlights on GWHI Instagram
• Change IG, website
• Reach out to salons in the area
• Reach out to photographer
• Write email to the sororities
• Update Facebook Page with bio- invite people to like it
• Contact UCSB
• Venue Agreement
• Reach out to SLO Museum for letter of rec
• Process of applying to non profit
• FAQs from email (with Maddie)
• Make preferred task list/job description
• Invite people to GWHI3
• Refine elevator pitch
• Write sororities who we did NOT speak to about posting in their FB group
  ○ Tell them what to post in their group (obvi)
  ○ encourage them to post ASAP
• Write sororities who we DID speak to and still have them post in their group
  ○ Tell them what to post in their group
  ○ Encourage them to post ASAP
  ○ The post should have a little blurb about GWHI, the deadline of applying, and the Feb 7th and March 8th dates in there
• FAQ about diversity
• Contacting Madeline about printing possibilities
• Talking Friday 1/18
• Write an email to fraternities for volunteering
• Write an email for agreement about posting story online
  ○ Don’t have to
  ○ Photo with story, no names
● Planning another get together with Maddie for email FAQs
● Email to fraternity volunteer
● Send out online email asking them to sign the agreement before posting online
  ○ safely online
  ○ No names
  ○ GWHI photo
  ○ story that they submitted
● Send follow up email to venue too
● Email Lauren from the newspaper at UCSB (the Gphi that wants to feature us)
● Email Chi Delta Theta nmizuma97@gmail.com who volunteered everybody and coordinate that
  with the Google form (They all should write separately on the form)
  ○ And super soon we will send them a sign up sheet for Thursday March 7th & Friday
    March 8th
  ○ https://goo.gl/forms/A9DmDQqCy9G6QerJ3
● Make a password doc
● Categorizing Preferred task list
● Administrative task
● Website task
● Pulling Testimonials from IG
● Write email confirming that we received application and will be informing them on Feb 3 of
  future details, continuously sending out that email
● Write email reaching out to current SLO sororities about their sister sororities
● Write out IG DM for GWHI to send to sorority accounts
● Send email to SLO people who applied (continuous)
● Rewrite Ticket Sales email so it can be sent out in SB
  ○ (Basically it needs to be written in a way that allows girls to send it in an email and also
    post on Facebook)
● Ask mentors to reach out to GWHI 3 mentees on Saturday (2/16) to remind them about their
  stories/ask if they have any questions/confirm they got the email
● GWHI 2 Emails to be updated with new dates, locations, times, number of participants
● Make copy of that and update
● What does a support group look like w/maddie
● How to know FAQ
● Send testimonial text to friends
● Create and add to doc
● Write photographer & videographer agreements
● Testimonial emails GWHIAIways
● Email volunteer organizations in SB
● Could only find one that fit (the equivalent of RISE)
● Collect all GWHI Birthday’s
● Look into VS PINK “Girl Power Project”
● Send story reminder email
● Post about ticket sales release (with same venmo link) THIS FRIDAY FEB 15TH
- GWHI 3 Facebook event
- GWHI 3 Groupme (encourage all ladies to share on every personal platform they have)
- Personal Facebook for all team members
- GWHI Instagram story
- Reach out to Westmont girls about participating
- Post in both group me’s & FB groups “encourage your UCSB friends to participate”
- Reach out to all liaisons from sororities that haven’t gotten back to us (KKG, KAO, AXO)
- See organizations contact spreadsheet
- Insta story post
  - Madeline
  - Send to girls participating
- Find contacts for on campus orgs for participation
- Santa Barbara resources for gwhi participants:
  - UCSB:
    - [http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/WomensCenter/home](http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/WomensCenter/home)
    - [http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/responding-to-distressed-students/welcome](http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/responding-to-distressed-students/welcome)
    - [http://caps.sa.ucsb.edu](http://caps.sa.ucsb.edu)
  - Westmont:
    - [https://www.westmont.edu/student-life/living-campus/student-services/health-wellness/counseling-center](https://www.westmont.edu/student-life/living-campus/student-services/health-wellness/counseling-center)
    - [https://www.westmont.edu/about/institutes-and-centers/womens-leadership-council](https://www.westmont.edu/about/institutes-and-centers/womens-leadership-council)
  - SB:
    - [https://www.womensfunds.org/organization/mental-wellness-center](https://www.womensfunds.org/organization/mental-wellness-center)
    - The Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, 805-656-1111
      - [www.dvsolutions.org](http://www.dvsolutions.org)
    - Women's Therapy Support Group. Small, confidential empowerment group. Various topics discussed each week. Lesley, 805-565-9398 or 805-452-4164.
- Private email to girls and mentors
- Reinstating event
PR Campaign Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation:
● We had to adjust the plans because there were some unforeseen complications. However, through further development of the organization, I believe GWHI is set for success in the future.

Summative evaluation:
● Although the event was successful and exceeded expectations, the days prior the event did not going to plan. After already accepting the event would host less than 45 girls – 29 to be exact – the founders were discouraged when several others dropped out less than a week before the event leaving 18 participants. Finding this out, it was decided to cancel the public event and instead make it private. This caused backlash among the women who still wanted to have the event in its entirety. After collaborating with myself, the founders decided to continue forward with the event which ended up raising over $800 with just over 101 attendees.

● Was the activity or program adequately planned?
  ○ The timeline and objective of the event was adequate as it had been done twice before. However, I believe the timeline should have been extended due to the lack of involvement in the Santa Barbara area.

● Did the recipients of the message understand it?
  ○ The participants understood the agenda and purpose of GWHI. There were many attendees who had questions about the event and what it stood for, however, the experience in attending GWHI speaks to each individual differently and it was clear that it was understood based on the reactions.

● Were all primary and secondary audiences reached?
  ○ To the best of abilities, the audiences were reached. I believe this event needed more time to more adequately permeate the area, but it was successful nonetheless.

● Was the desired goal achieved?
  ○ Yes. The ultimate goal of GWHI is first to empower the participants and give them a cathartic experience to share their life experiences. After following up with the participants, they praised the event and impact it had had.

● Were the instructional objectives achieved?
  ○ Yes, we reached and educated all the publics we wished to.

● Were the motivational objectives achieved?
  ○ Yes, our publics were interested and happy to get involved and learn about the organization.

● What unforeseen circumstances affected the success of the program or activity?
○ The lack of credibility we had initially in Santa Barbara hindered the event as a whole. It was difficult to overcome this being at such a distance without the prior recognition. However, after cancelling and reinstituting the event, it was extremely successful and exceeded expectations.

● Did the program or activity fall within the budget set for it?
  ○ Yes.

Formative evaluation:
● The success of the event is encouraging and would definitely be beneficial to utilize in the future. We now know how to plan and advertise to get a successful turnout in a different city and raise an incredible amount of donations. Santa Barbara was an excellent trial to see the steps and unforeseen difficulties that would be faced when expanding as an organization.
Logo and Flyer Design:

girls who handle it
Who We Are

The project Girls Who Handle It is an art exhibit event where attendees will read stories & see photos of young women who are dealing with unbelievable difficulties that most people do not ever know about, and are managing these issues with remarkable resilience.

This project is about increasing the level of public vulnerability and advocate for a community of honest sharing and acceptance amongst women, specifically in contrast to what is portrayed on their social media profiles. In doing so, Girls Who Handle It is a platform where members of the community are provided with an opportunity to confront the pervasive norms of social media by directly addressing the issues these norms mandate that we hide.

Stay in Touch!

- Instagram
- @GirlsWhoHandleIt
- Facebook
- Facebook.com/Girls-Who-Handle-It
- Website
- GirlsWhoHandleIt.com

Coming soon to Santa Barbara!

Upcoming Events

Currently, we are focusing on our soonest event on March 8th. It will be a small intimate event for the girls of Santa Barbara. Starting out private and expanding from there is the plan for impacting Santa Barbara.

We are also very excited to announce we will be back at Cal Poly in November 2019!

Cal Poly is where our roots are and we are so stoked to put on a third GWHI event for the city of SLO.

We look forward to seeing you in the future!

If you'd like to donate to our cause, venmo: @GirlsWhoHandleIt.

What began as a Cal Poly senior project, GWHI has taken the Central Coast by storm.

The summer of 2018, our founders, Julia Freet and Asia Croson began their journey to making GWHI what it is today.

After two successful gallery events in Downtown SLO, GWHI is now expanding to Santa Barbara in March! Due to the rapid growth of this organization, Julia and Asia paired up with two more Cal Poly students to help with their strategy, communications, and event planning.
GWHi is coming to Santa Barbara!

Come experience this amazing movement where young women from YOUR community share their experiences & how they HANDLED IT!

Location: UCSB DAHC
March 8th @ 6-9pm
Tickets are donation based @girlswohandleit on venmo
FAQ’s, Messages, Testimonials Emails:

On Diversity:
GWHI is a platform open to anyone who wishes to share their experiences. We do our best to promote the opportunity to many different groups of individuals and want to make this available to all who are interested. We want all the girls who share their vulnerabilities to feel valued and heard.

Cal Poly itself lacks in diversity, and at GWHI we want to ensure we outshine the campus climate. Sharing diverse stories and experiences from many different backgrounds is one of our top priorities.

Allow others to relate

No discrimination of experience or qualifications for vulnerabilities to be shared

Women of all racial identities are welcome and encouraged to apply. We want all voices to be heard!

Invite to Like FB Page:

Hi! I am currently interning for this amazing organization that aims to support young women by creating a community empowerment movement. Please like and share this page so we can reach more individuals with a passion for our cause!

FB Post:

Friends and Family!
I am currently working as a Public Relations Officer for a local Nonprofit called Girls Who Handle It. Girls Who Handle is a community empowerment movement. Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation. By showcasing the stories of young women who have battled traumas in their lives, these girls are given a platform to share their experiences. Held in a gallery setting, the girls type out their stories, followed by a screenshot of their Instagram at the time of their struggle, to show the skewed perception of people’s lives on social media. In turn, we hope GWHI not only interrupts the constant comparison of ourselves to others, but also inspires others to handle their difficulties and promote transparency.

We are preparing for an upcoming event held in Santa Barbara as we are expanding outside of Slo! Please like and share this page (and post!) to support this amazing organization and stay up to date on our upcoming event!
Thank you!
FB Event Invite Post:
For those who live in Santa Barbara, are able to make the trip or are simply interested in finding out more about GWHI, here is the official event page! Thank you in advance for your support!

Elevator Pitch:

Girls Who Handle It is a community empowerment movement. Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation. By showcasing the stories of young women who have battled traumas in their lives, these girls are given a platform to share their experiences. Held in a gallery setting, the girls type out their stories, followed by a screenshot of their Instagram at the time of their struggle, to show the skewed perception of people’s lives on social media. In turn, we hope GWHI not only interrupts the constant comparison of ourselves to others, but also inspires others to handle their difficulties and promote transparency.

Testimonials Accumulated:

“GWHI is an event like no other. I feel like it brings much needed perspective onto the human struggles we all face and hide, specifically, girls. Our stories need to be told now more than ever, and more importantly, people need to listen.”

“GWHI is super impactful because it is a reminder than women often have something deeper going on in their lives than social media portrays. The event really opened my eyes to how strong the women around me really are.”

“While GWHI was months ago, the stories I read and the ladies who opened up still stick with me today. This creative event is another amazing way women are taking this decade by storm, and can’t be missed.”

“I believe Girls Who Handle It should be held in every town everywhere, because it brings a community together to support women for who they are and the troubles they face. I left both SLO events feeling courageous and uplifted.”

“Girls who Handle It is such an eye-opening event that shows what happens behind the scenes of social media. I think it’s important we have events like GWI so people know that it’s okay to not be okay, you don’t have to hide it.”
“Girls Who Handle It has an amazing way of showing young women that they are not alone in their struggles throughout life.”

“A year ago I got the pleasure to be in a room filled with testimonials that brought to life the true strength of women. I was surrounded by the support and love of the community of SLO as they circled the room reading each testimonial, thinking about how proud I was to be a woman. These girls have handled life and stood up to tell their stories. They took off the mask that we so easily hide behind, and as a result, empowered other girls to embrace life regardless of the pain it may bring and keep moving forward. Everyone has a story and I was so happy to be apart of the story of GWHI.”

“I had the privilege of attending the first two GWHI events, and I was struck by the strength, compassion, empathy, and respect that were all palpable in the room at each event. This stemmed so beautifully and organically from the raw honesty of the young women who boldly shared their stories, and in turn, from all of us who got to experience the exhibit. I was moved to tears, and I still feel that impact. It truly was more than a “privilege” to attend GWHI... it was pure magic, and I am inspired to greater honesty in my own life, for having experienced it.”

“Girls Who Handle It has transformed from a senior project into a movement right before my eyes, and I have watched it empower women by lifting the veil off of their vulnerabilities. The relevance of its mission cannot and will not be underestimated”

“Girls Who Handle It was one of the most empowering events I’ve ever attended or participated in. The endless support that is given to the girls who are brave enough to share their stories is amazing, and the fabulous women who created this event are even more magnificent! It’s so empowering to be surrounded by such a strong network of love and support”

“I had an incredible, enlightening, and powerful experience attending Girls Who Handle It. I have never seen a community come together like that to support such powerful women. There was no judgement, anger, or pity in the room. It was an atmosphere of support, strength, and solidarity.”

"Attending a Girls Who Handle It event is a powerful, deeply meaningful experience. Witnessing women share their personal stories with family and friends, and making the event their own, is a moving, hope-filled step towards healing and change. Get involved and join the movement!"

“Girls Who Handle It was an inspiring, eye opening event. Reading the stories that women shared with friends, family, and complete strangers really made me see some of the pain these women suffered all alone. I hope that more people follow this movement and feel comfortable sharing their stories with people they love.”

“Girls Who Handle It" is a motivational and empowering event by providing a platform for women to open up about their personal experiences. It takes a certain kind of bravery and courage to open up to the entire world about challenges that they have faced and overcome. The women behind GWHI gave these participants the means to do so by supporting, encouraging and simply, listening to them - no
matter the story. No matter how big. No matter how small. The event is a judgement free zone that is turning the stigma around that "personal problems are only personal" and the idea that one has to face these battles alone. GWHI embodies love, strength and opportunity for women all around."

“It was definitely a beautiful experience. Seeing everyone coming together and sharing their experiences was so exciting. I was honored to be amongst so many strong girls.”

“Thank YOU for empowering all of us girls and putting on this event!!”

“THANK YOU for doing this - it’s so humbling to see how many other women are going through similar situations as myself in their journey with mental illness… The work you’re doing and community that you’re creating is so inspiring, and is going to give so many others who are struggling the resources, knowledge, and confidence to confront & conquer their own challenges.”

“I love what y’all are doing with this project! Thanks for helping it be OK to not be OK!”

GWHI FAQ Page:

1. How do I know if Girls Who Handle It is the right thing for me?

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If you want to let other women going through similar struggles know that they are not alone.

If you are a college-aged woman looking to support a group of strong, amazing women and are ready to be supported back.

If you have ever felt or dealt with the pressure of the socially constructed norms of social media.

If you are ready to step out of your comfort zone and allow yourself to feel the emotions that reading your own experiences (perhaps for the first time) may bring back.

*If you are at a point in your healing process that you feel comfortable with publicly sharing your story with our community, the other Girls Who Handle It, as well as being exposed to other stories*

2. What will I be doing if I choose to participate?

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Before the event, you will compose a 1-2 page document sharing your personal experience and how you handled/continue to handle it every day.

There will be a photo shoot where you will take your own signature GWHI photo to be displayed at the event.

You will be able to attend (optional) get-togethers before the event where you can meet the other women participating in your event.

At the event, you will not be required to speak, stand by your display, or be subjected to have any conversations you don’t want or are not ready to have. We are here to make you feel safe and supported.

3. What will I get out of participating in Girls Who Handle It?

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An outlet to express yourself on a unique platform in hopes of inspiring others to do the same.

A support group for life.

You will gain a mentor from one of the past GWHI classes who will be there for you to reach out to for support or with any questions or concerns.

You will receive a digital copy as well as a physical print of your signature GWHI photo.

You will receive GWHI merchandise as a thank you for your participation in Girls Who Handle It.

See our testimonials from past participants for more information here.

Please note that participants should be able to attend the event as well as (1) photoshoot day specified in the participation submission form.

Cal Poly Sorority Email:

Hello Hello! I am so honored to announce that Girls Who Handle It is officially expanding to UCSB on March 8th, 2019!! For those of you who know us, you’ll know how much this means to us to be able to further spread the GWHI mission and promote women empowerment to different college campuses! For those of you who don’t know us, we have hosted two art exhibit-style events where your fellow sorority sisters, panhellenic women, and students have shared the hardships that they have gone
through and how they handled them in order to promote transparency and inspire others going through similar issues.

We have an amazing group of UCSB women participating in this event, and we are so looking forward to giving them the most love and support we can! The event on March 8th will be held in the DAHC on UCSB’s campus from 6-9pm, and if you are interested at all in attending, you can secure a spot on our guest list by Venmoing @girlswhohandleit! Like last time, tickets are entirely donation-based, so feel free to donate whatever you feel called to! We understand Santa Barbara is a bit of a drive, but if you would still like to make a donation to the cause, it would be much appreciated!

In the meantime, give us a follow on Instagram @girlswhohandleit or check out our event page https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/ to keep up to date with everything Girls Who Handle It! For more information on who we are or what our events look like, please refer to our website www.girlswhohandleit.com <3

Thank you so much for your continuous love and support, and we can’t wait for GWHI SLO in the fall ;)

The Girls Who Handle It Team

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FB Post:

Hello Hello! I am so honored to announce that our women empowerment campaign, Girls Who Handle It, is officially coming to UCSB on March 8th, 2019!! Founded in San Luis Obispo, we aim to give young women who have experienced hardships in their lives a platform to share their experiences and help others going through similar issues. The event on March 8th will be held in the DAHC on campus from 6-9pm, and will consist of an art exhibit-style event where your fellow sorority sisters, panhellenic women, and students will have their experiences displayed on the walls along with a screenshot of their Instagram from the time of their struggle to show the skewed perception of people’s lives on social media. Through this, we hope to interrupt the constant comparison of ourselves to others as well as inspire others to handle their difficulties and promote transparency.

If you would like to attend this event and show support for your fellow women, you can secure a spot on our guest list by Venmoing @girlswhohandleit! Tickets are entirely donation-based, so feel free to donate whatever you feel called to! Please note that *limited* tickets will also be available at the door.

In the meantime, give us a follow on Instagram @girlswhohandleit or check out our event page https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/ to keep up to date with everything Girls Who Handle It! For more information on who we are or what our events look like, please refer to our website www.girlswhohandleit.com <3

Thank you so so much, and we hope to see as many of your beautiful faces there as possible!
Sponsorship Email:

Hi!

We are Girls Who Handle It (GWHI), an organization aimed at empowering women on the Central Coast. Last year, we started the GWHI project and created an art exhibit where SLO women were able to come together, share their stories of hardship and resilience, all while empowering and supporting one another! The past two event were such successes and positively impacted so many people that we are bringing it to Santa Barbara on March 8th!

While our main goal right now is making our 3rd GWHI event as successful as possible, a long-term goal of ours is to become a non-profit organization. We are currently starting up fundraising efforts to help make both of these goals a reality, and we would absolutely love to have ______________ involved. We were hoping that we could partner up for a fundraising event and support us with a sponsorship. We are also accepting monetary donations, donations of service or use of facilities for our incredible GWHI participants. Anything helps!

If you do choose to support GWHI, we would be more than happy to display your business information on our website as well as on our social media and, potentially, at the event. We can definitely meet up to discuss this more in detail if you would like!

Thank you so much for considering helping make Girls Who Handle It the best that it can possibly be. We could not do what we do without the support of this community! If you have any further questions regarding our organization or the event, please reach out to us. In the meantime, check out our website: https://www.girlswhohandleit.com/

We hope to hear from you soon!

Best wishes,

Follow Up Sorority Meeting:

Hello ladies!

First of all, I'd like to thank you so much for allowing us to come present at your meetings! You are all such amazing groups of women, and we felt so honored to see how many of you truly believe in the Girls Who Handle It mission! I'm reaching out to you all again today because we need more college-aged women to participate in order to put on this event; the women who have applied have already blew us away with the amount of strength and resilience that they have displayed, and we want more than
anything to give them as well as any other Girls Who Handle It a platform to share their story with their community.

If you could, we would love it if you sent a note from us to your chapters (Facebook, Groupme, Email, etc.) to help us recruit more people:

"Hi all! We are a community empowerment movement called Girls Who Handle It! We recently spoke at your chapter meeting to tell you about an event that we are putting on in Santa Barbara. Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation by giving college-aged women who have faced adversity in their lives a platform to share their experiences & how they handled them. We hold this event in an art gallery setting to showcase each woman, their written experience, & a screenshot of their Instagram to show the disparity between how we portray ourselves online & what’s really going on. We have held two INCREDIBLY successful events in SLO already & are preparing to bring GWHI to Santa Barbara on March 8th! While some of your sisters have already applied to participate, we would love as many of you to apply as possible! You can find our submission form on our website www.girlswhohandleit.com and our official IG is @girlswhohandleit if you wanna check us out! 💜"

Thank you so much again, and we hope to see you all again very soon!

Much love,

___

Sorority we did not speak to but did email:

Hello ladies!

It's us again! We're sorry that we couldn't work out a time to attend one of your chapter meetings, however, there is still room for girls to get involved! I'm reaching out to you all again today because we need more college-aged women to participate in order to put on this event; the women of your campus who have applied have already blew us away with the amount of strength and resilience that they have displayed, and we want more than anything to give them as well as any other Girls Who Handle It a platform to share their story with their community.

If you could, we would love it if you sent a note from us to your chapters (Facebook, Groupme, Email, etc.) to help us recruit more people:

"Hi all! We are a community empowerment movement called Girls Who Handle It! Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation by giving college-aged women who have faced adversity in their lives a platform to share their experiences & how they handled them. We hold this event in an art gallery setting to showcase each woman, their written experience, & a screenshot of their Instagram to show the disparity between how we portray ourselves online & what’s really going on. We have held two INCREDIBLY successful events in SLO already & are preparing to bring GWHI to Santa Barbara on March 8th! While members of your Panhellenic and UCSB community have already
applied to participate, we would love as many of you to apply as possible! You can find our submission form on our website www.girlswhohandleit.com and our official IG is @girlswhohandleit if you wanna check us out!💜

Thank you so much again, and we hope to see you all very soon!

Much love,

___

DM for CP Sororities to Send to to SB Counterparts:

Hi hi I’m reaching out to you about a community empowerment movement that I’m involved in called Girls Who Handle It! Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation by giving college-aged women who have faced adversity in their lives a platform to share their experiences & how they handled them. We hold this event in an art gallery setting to showcase each woman, their written experience, & a screenshot of their Instagram to show the disparity between how we portray ourselves online & what’s really going on. We have held two INCREDIBLY successful events in SLO already & are preparing to bring GWHI to Santa Barbara in March! We’ve already spoken with some chapters, but we’d love to come present at your next meeting & tell you a little more about the event/what it would be like to participate! Our official IG is @girlswhohandleit if you wanna check it out!💜

___

For Slo Girls Who Applied:

Hello,

I noticed that you have applied to participate in the Santa Barbara Girls Who Handle It project! First of all, I’d like to thank you for being on top of the application process and being willing to share your story with us. While there’s no question that we LOVE our SLO people like no other, we would like to keep this specific event special for the Santa Barbara/Goleta community, so we will have to remove your application for the time being.

We will be having a SLO GWHI event again in the fall of this year, and we truly hope you choose to apply again! You would be an amazing edition to the project, and we look forward to see how you inspire and empower the people lucky enough to be around you!

More information about the SLO event will be available on both our website www.girlswhohandleit.com and our Instagram @girlswhohandelit after the Santa Barbara event is finished. Thank you for being a Girl Who Handles It, and we hope to see you again in the future!

Best wishes,
Confirmation email:

Hello beautiful,

You women, we can’t even comprehend how much you have gone through and handled, honestly. We’re so in awe of your stories and we are so proud of you for stepping up this way through Girls Who Handle It. Our hearts are so full that you are willing to share, thank you thank you thank you.

You might never know just how much this project will help other women just like you. You may never hear from them or see them or even know of them, but KNOW that your story, specifically YOURS, will encourage another to live a life they’re not ashamed of, to live their truth, and you are making an impact.

**This email contains a lot of information, please please please read the email in its entirety to make sure you understand the whole process!**

Your involvement means you will be sharing your experience in written format (we will be asking you questions to lead you, so you don’t have to come up with all it on your own! You can also use a lot of what you wrote in your initial form submission on the GWHI website) along with a simple photo. We will ask for some social media participation later down the line!

Next steps:

Step 1: Book your shoot ASAP here: https://asiacroson.as.me/GWHI

In order to participate in GWHI 3, you must book your shoot by this Wednesday, as photo day is *only one day this Thursday, February 7th*.

Shoots take about thirty minutes at the most and will be on UCSB’s campus (the map is available on the Shoot Prep website below!)

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Step 2: Check out this link for all the info on what to expect for the shoot:
girlswhohandleit.com/shootprep

Step 3: Block off your calendar for Friday, March 8th! We will be hosting GWHI 3 at UCSB. This is the Facebook event link; please RSVP & share: https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/

Step 4: Keep your eye out for an email from us on this week! We will be providing you with all the information you need to start writing about your experience.

More in depth about the project based on what we talked about at the meeting:
The purpose of this project is to support an increased level of public vulnerability and advocate for a community of honest sharing and acceptance, specifically amongst women. (Re: why do we never share on Instagram what we are really going through?) In doing so, Girls Who Handle It focuses on creating a platform where women in the Santa Barbara community can share their personal stories about a hardship or struggle in their lives and how they handle these challenges. The underlying goal for this project is not only to allow women like you to open up in a new setting, but to illustrate that there is more going on in our lives than what is presented on social media. We will be presenting a screenshot of all our participant’s Instagram feeds to bring attention to the differences- and encourage others to not compare their lives to the highlight reel of others’.

We want you to know: you are a woman of strength, dignity, and grace in sharing your life with us in this way. We so want to celebrate your openness and confidence, and are so excited to have your voice be heard. We are hoping that you will be inspired by not only by sharing your story but also by reading the stories of the other women who will be sharing their experiences, too.

So so looking forward to having you be a part of this movement with us and cannot wait to see you Thursday!!

Tons of love,
The Girls Who Handle It Team

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FB Post for Participants:

I am a Girl Who Handles It. On March 8th from 6-9pm in the DAHC on campus, I will be participating in the community empowerment movement called Girls Who Handle It (GWHI). This will consist of an art exhibit-style event where I, as well as many other young women in our community, will share our experiences of hardship as well as how we handled/continue to handle it in order to promote transparency in the age of social media and help others going through similar issues.

If you would like to attend this event and not only support me, but your fellow sorority sisters, panhellenic women, and students, you can secure a spot on our guest list by Venmoing @girlswhohandleit. Tickets are entirely donation-based, so feel free to donate whatever you feel called to! Please note that *limited* tickets will also be available at the door.

In the meantime, give GWHI a follow on Instagram @girlswhohandleit or check out our event page https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/ to keep up to date with everything Girls Who Handle It! For more information on the movement, please refer to www.girlswhohandleit.com <3

Thank you so so much, and I hope to see as many of your beautiful faces there as possible!

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Participants Recruit:

Hello!

Thank you again so much for applying to join the Girls Who Handle It movement! We’re emailing you today because we need a few more participants, and we would like your help! We will be expanding the deadline a couple of days to see if we can fill the walls of our venue; if you know of any college-aged women who could benefit from participating in this event with you, please send them our way or have them check out our website and application on our website, www.girlswhohandleit.com.

Thank you so much again, and we can’t wait to meet you in person! <3

Best wishes,

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Photoshoot Reminder:

Hello ladies!
This is your last reminder to book your photoshoot with Asia by this evening!

We would still be so honored for you to participate in this event, but we need the confirmation (the photoshoot booking) from you as soon as possible so that we can move forward in the process.

Here is the link to do that now:  https://asiacroson.as.me/GWHIphotos :)

We hope to hear from you soon!

Much love,

___

Can’t make it to SB Photo Shoot:

Oh no! We are so sorry to hear that! We are still only going to be offering the one photoshoot day in Santa Barbara, however, we just decided that we would be willing to offer a photoshoot day in SLO, given you’re willing to make the drive here! If that works for you, we’d be SO happy to have you as we still really want you to be able to participate in GWHI. Just let me know ASAP any day that works for you as long as it’s before Feb 21st!

Looking forward to hearing from you!

___

Thank you for Photo Sign Up:

Hi all!

Thank you so much for booking your photo shoot with Asia! We are so looking forward to finallyyy meeting each and every one of you in person so that we can start getting to know each other a little bit better <3 Please make sure to double check your appointment time and checking out the website for more info on where to go and how to prepare!  https://www.girlswhohandleit.com/shootprep

While you’re waiting for your upcoming photo shoot, please take a moment to join our Facebook group for GWHI 3:  https://www.facebook.com/groups/2292350084368782/ . We will not only be using this space to share important information regarding the event, but as a way for you all to communicate with each other as well! Feel free to also add each of us individually on Facebook, and if you don’t have a profile, let us know so we don’t end up messaging strangers with the same name (LOL).

We hope to hear from you ladies soon,

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Photo Follow Up:

You beautiful women,
We had SUCH an amazing time meeting all of you yesterday! We are so so grateful for each & every one of you, we seriously already love you!

**Important dates coming up:**

Friday, February 22nd: Stories due

Story Writing Questions are due (so don't worry about it until after midterms!)

Monday, March 5th: Social Media Flood

This is the day that you will be all sharing your photos at the same time on IG! This is a critical part of spreading awareness; it has an amazing accumulative effectiveness and we are so excited for it!

We will be sending you the photos the weekend before, but don't share them until that Monday!

Thursday, March 7th: Dinner

We will be hosting a dinner at our AirBnb in SB (location TBD) for all of you to meet, eat some pizza, and get to know each other before the big event!

Friday, March 8th: GWHI 3!

The event will be from 6-9 pm in the DAHC in the Music Building on campus. Tickets are donation based and available by Venmo to @girlswhohandleit! We will be officially releasing tickets shortly, but your friends & family can of course reserve their spots early. Thank you for sharing this event with anyone & everyone you know! Please invite your sorority, or literally anyone else!

[https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/](https://www.facebook.com/events/328983371070745/)

We have heard from so many of you that this is something so needed in Santa Barbara. Thank you for setting the example for women where you are, for your future sisters you want to come to UCSB, for the girls who currently feel alone in their struggle. You're an inspiration. <3

Tons of love,
The GWHI Team

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**Volunteer Interest Email:**
Thank you so so much for your interest in helping make GWHI amazing! We are absolutely blown away by the love and support we have received from our community following the event’s debut, and we couldn’t do what we do without YOUR help! If you are able to help out the week of the event, even if just for a short bit, we def encourage you to fill out this form right here: girlswhohandleit.com/volunteer

After you fill out the form, expect to hear back from us as it gets closer to the event!

Much love! <3

Don’t forget to check out our website and keep up with our journey on social media! →
Girlswhohandleit.com
@girlswhohandleit

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Fraternity Volunteer:

Hello Gentlemen of ,

We are Girls Who Handle It, a nonprofit organization based out of San Luis Obispo. We are a community empowerment movement. Our mission is to increase public vulnerability and promote honest conversation. By showcasing the stories of young women who have battled traumas in their lives, these girls are given a platform to share their experiences. Held in a gallery setting, the girls type out their stories, followed by a screenshot of their Instagram at the time of their struggle, to show the skewed perception of people’s lives on social media. In turn, we hope GWHI not only interrupts the constant comparison of ourselves to others, but also inspires others to handle their difficulties and promote transparency.

On Friday, March 8th we will be hosting an event on your campus, UCSB, in an effort to further our message and expand our empowerment movement. We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to assist us in setting up the event, as well as standing at the door and handing out programs to attendees.

If this sounds like something your organization would be interested in, please let us know so we can give you all the details!

You can check us out on our instagram, @girlswhohandleit, or our website, girlswhohandleit.com.

Thank you in advance,

The Girls Who Handle It Team
Story Writing Guiding Questions:

As a reminder, these questions are not meant to limit your storytelling, sway the narrative, or urge you to portray your struggle in a certain light. These questions exist to help you organize your thoughts and allow you to be expressive and vulnerable. Be sure to read all the questions before you begin. And don’t worry, we only have 2 pages of room, so you are not able to exceed that amount of wording, however, there needs to be a one and a half page minimum.

This is your chance to tell your story. Make it count.

**PLEASE USE THESE QUESTIONS AS GUIDANCE AND DO NOT ANSWER IN QUESTION/ANSWER FORMAT. MAKE SURE TO ERASE THE QUESTIONS IN YOUR FULL SUBMISSION**

1. Describe the challenge, obstacle, or experience that you have struggled with that inspired you to participate in this project.
   a. How has this experience affected the different areas of your life (social, academic, familial, work life, etc.)?
   b. What do you feel has been the hardest part of this experience?

2. How have you worked to overcome and grow from this challenge? How did you handle it?
   a. What/who has been the most helpful?

3. Why did/do you feel like this wasn’t something you could share on social media?
   a. In a broader sense, why do you think these kinds of things typically aren’t shared on social media? In other words, what do you believe prevents people from posting about personal struggles?

4. If you were to share this on social media, what do you think that would look like? And how do you think that would affect yourself and others?
   a. Do you think the overall effect would be positive or negative?
   b. If you have shared about it, how was that received?

5. What would you say to someone going through your same experience (i.e. women who could be reading this response)?

6. Please include a screenshot of your Instagram profile at the time where you were in the midst of this hardship.
   a. If this struggle has been long-term and ongoing, feel free to submit a photo of what your profile looked like during a peak season of hardship or turmoil.
7. Please **bold a line or two within your story** to be included as the caption in the Instagram photo to be posted on the Girls Who Handle It account. (For example, Julia’s was “Speak up to anyone who will listen because your voice matters and deserves to be heard.” Please check out the Instagram @girlswhohandleit for more examples.)

**How to Submit:**
When you are finished writing, please submit 3 THINGS to girlswhohandleit@gmail.com by **February 22nd!!**

Submit your 1 ½ - 2 page story in a **Word document. DO NOT submit a PDF.** You will be asked to reformat and resend in a Word doc format if you submit a PDF to us.

1. Include a **bolded** line from your story that you would like us to use as an Instagram caption!
2. **Attach** a screenshot of your Instagram (from the peak time of the hardship you wrote about) to that email. Please do not include this in the Word document. It’s much easier to save from a .jpg attachment!
3. Take a deep breath! YOU DID IT.

**Other Feedback Questions *Optional and appreciated but responses will not be made public***

You may include these in the body of your email! These do not add to your 1.5-2 page minimum.

1. How do you hope you will feel after sharing your story?
2. Is there anything you’re nervous about for the event, and/or sharing your story?
3. What do you hope others will get out of coming to the event and reading your story (as well as the story of others)?
4. Do you think this event and this project as a whole will contribute to fighting the anti-vulnerability norms on social media? And how so?

THANK YOU sooo much again for participating in Girls Who Handle It. We appreciate every one of you so very much, and we look forward to seeing the impact you all make. <3

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**Photo Release:**

Hi ladies!

We are so excited to be able to share with you these photos of you- I know you’ve already seen your own, but it’s so POWERFUL to see them all together. I am so proud to know you ladies.

You can click this link, and download your individual photo! (I will post a video in the FB group on how to do that from your phone!)
SUPER IMPORTANT THINGS:

1. Post this photo between 8:00 am and 9:30 am on MONDAY MORNING MARCH 4TH. We are hoping the flood of these GWHI photos will show a compelling message to your followers, and the SB Community about what happens beyond our IG feeds.

2. **Required:** Start your caption by saying this: “I am a Girl Who Handles It. @girlswhohandleit”

   The rest of your caption is (of course), up to you. You can take this opportunity to:

   a. **Share details about the event** like “I will be sharing my story this Friday from ___ at a GWHI3 at the UCSB DAHC along with ___ other amazing women. Tickets are donation based, and you can Venmo @girlswhohandleit to get on the list.” OR, above and beyond, copy & paste the FB link into your profile and mention that in your caption. https://www.facebook.com/Girls-Who-Handle-It-1928068113897669/
      That is the link for quick reference!
      *(You can steal any of these examples directly, or use whatever words you choose)*

   b. **Share details about the project** like “I am participating in this project, Girls Who Handle It, to to open up about what I *don’t* share on Insta, what none of us share. The purpose of this project is to support an increased level of public vulnerability and advocate for a community of honest sharing and acceptance, specifically amongst women. In doing so, Girls Who Handle It focuses on creating a platform where women in our community can share their personal stories about a hardship or struggle in their lives and how they handle these challenges. The underlying goal for this project is not only to allow women like you to open up in a new setting, but to illustrate that there is more going on in our lives than what is presented on social media.” *Again, you can steal any of these examples directly, or use whatever words you choose*

   c. **Share details about your story/how you are handling things in any way you choose.**
      We are not encouraging you to post your whole story on IG, as we are hoping people will attend the event, but of course how much you want to share is completely up to you.

   d. **Say nothing,** except “I am a Girl Who Handles It. @girlswhohandleit”

Everything we have done these last few months is leading up to THIS WEEK, and we are so so excited and ready to share this project. THANK YOU for not only telling your story, but showing up time and time again to do this with us.

**Next steps for you:**

Monday morning: Instagram flood
Wednesday night: GWHI dinner
Friday: Event
We will be sending you more info on the dinner + event super soon.

Please respond via text (805-888-7448 or 925-300-7645), or in the Group Me, or respond to this email that you have received and read this message and understand that you need to post your photo on IG Monday morning from 8:00-9:30 am. THIS IS SUPER IMPORTANT!

We love you guys.

Tons of love,

___

Private to Public Event:

Hi ladies,

First of all, thank you so much for submitting your stories, we are so honored that you have chosen GWHI to be where you share, inspire and encourage others.

We know the event is only a few days away, and we have come to terms with the fact that we are still planting seeds in Santa Barbara- which means that you, as the first round of Santa Barbara Girls Who Handle It, are starting the movement. At this time, we realize the movement isn’t ready for the magnitude of the event we had planned this Friday. Therefore, we have decided to postpone the event at UCSB.

Instead, we have decided to focus our efforts solely on you- as the group of women who are driven by your passion and desire to help others through your hardships. You’re selfless, brave, and strong and we want to honor you as much as possible. In lieu of our public event on Friday, we want to host an intimate Girls Who Handle It, where you can meet each other, share your stories, and continue the growth of this powerful movement together. We have an AirBnb in Goleta, and will have pizza and all your photos and stories displayed for you to share with each other and take home for yourselves. This dinner is one of the most powerful experiences we have in our GWHI process, so we are really looking forward to having you all together.

We also still want to go through with the social media flood, so you will also be receiving your signature GWHI photo and updated captions soon. Your social media presence will have a powerful effect on the spreading of this movement (we’ve seen it happen already!)

Please let us know if you can make it- we have intentionally planned the dinner for the same hours as the event on campus (6-9 pm) because we know you all had planned on being there. We will send you the address shortly, and so look forward to hearing from you. We love you ladies so much.

Tons of love,
The GWHI Team
Cancel Email to Mentors:

Hi beautiful women,

Thank you so much for volunteering your services and time and energy and amazingness time and time again through the GWHI Mentorship program. We love you more than we ever thought possible.

Please read the email we have sent to the SB Girls, as an update about the status of the event this Friday. You are indeed invited to our private event, and we hope you can join us in honoring these women as the community that we are.

Attempt to Recover Event:

Good morning ladies,

This week has been tough. We put months of work into this event, and are struggling with how we can make this the best for you. **We want to know we hear you**, and that you are very disappointed. We are currently doing our best to recover what we can of the event and continue forth with an event for you. **We don't want to get your hopes up** because there is a possibility we will not be able to recover the event space. But your emails and texts convinced us that no matter the turn out or how many stories on the walls, each of you want your story to be heard, and that is worth anything to us.

So, in short, we are doing our best. We love you and are so devastated because you, as the ladies who have chosen to participate in the project and are so passionate about its cause alongside us, are the women we want to support the most, and we know this has been difficult.

Wish I had more concrete news, and crossing my fingers we will shortly. Either way, we will see you Friday and will be sending out the flood info literally as soon as we know what we can do!

We love you so much and I promise are doing everything we can, we want you to know you are our priority and we really appreciate you being so open with us about wanting to do anything to keep the event still going. Means the world to us. <3

Tons of love,
The GWHI Team

Reinstating event:
LADIES - big news. IT HAS BEEN A WEEK LET ME TELL YOU!

GWHI 3 IS BACK ON!!

You were so disappointed we weren't having the event, and were so dedicated to making it happen no matter what.

And you know we never want to let you guys down so we are doing the damn thing!! So the event is back on, and if you haven't made any new plans, we'd love to see you there!! Let us know if you're still able to make it!

—

Hey ladies!

TWO MORE DAYS YAY!

We just wanted to give you all a brief rundown for what we have in mind for the event on Friday!

→ ALSO DINNER! -insert info here-

Back to the event on Friday:

Obviously it will be going on from ___, with all of your lovely faces coming and going at any point during that time. Remember, it’s designed to be a pass-through type of environment. Sooooo

- Come in
- Say hi to us (DUH!)
- Read your stories and the stories of your fellow GWHI participants
- Have those lovely, powerful, thought-provoking conversations
- Grab some coffee (donated__ )
- Take some pics and tag ____ as the location (and the @girlswhohandleit instagram!)
- Enjoy the rest of your night!

We've gotten a couple questions about dress code, so we'll go over that here, too! The bottom line is **wear what will make you feel good.** It always feels great to we dress up a little bit, so we will be in some fun jumpsuits and jackets (because it’s also freakin cold) :) But hey, if you feel your best in an old pair of jeans and a t-shirt, then wear that!!

On a similar note, the GWHI team will be wearing our hair up in top buns as a symbol of the project and we encourage you all to wear your hair like this, too! We think this can be a powerful display of unity among our group, but again NO PRESSURE! Some of you have expressed that you don’t love your hair styled up in a top bun, and that’s totally fine!! Again, **if it makes you feel good, it’s a great idea.**
Annndddd as always, if you have any questions at all, feel free to text, Facebook message, email, or carrier pigeon any of us!

Tons of love,