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Thirty New Girl Scout Badges Now Available to Power Girl Leadership in Key 21st Century Issues

Ventura, CA – Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) today reveals 30 new badges now available exclusively for girls ages 5–18 that not only enhance the one-of-a-kind Girl Scout experience, but also address some of society's most pressing needs, such as cybersecurity, environmental advocacy, mechanical engineering, robotics, computer science, and space exploration. In a safe all-girl space, Girl Scouts develop important soft skills, including confidence and perseverance, as well as hard skills, setting them up for success and preparing them to take action for a better world. Today's youth are more vocal than ever about the change they want to see, and Girl Scouts are the most equipped with the skills needed to make a real impact. The results are proven: girls who participate in Girl Scouts are more than twice as likely to exhibit community problem-solving skills than girls who don't (57 percent versus 28 percent).

The unique Girl Scout environment provides fun, exciting, and essential experiences that carry into girls' future careers and life success; the KPMG Women's Leadership Study of more than 3,000 professional and college women shows that early exposure to leadership has a significant impact on a woman's perceptions of her ability to lead. Additionally, 76 percent of women today wish they had learned more about leadership and had more leadership opportunities while growing up, demonstrating how imperative it is for girls and volunteers to join Girl Scouts.

Jody Skenderian, CEO of Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast shares "These new badges allow Girls to take the lead in their own lives and be a Go-Getter, Innovator, Risk-Taker and Leader. Girl Scouts inspires women leadership and works with top organizations in fields that interest today's girls. Combined with Girl Scouts' expertise in Girl leadership, these organizations and specialists provide the most cutting-edge programming available to Girls. Badges like the College Knowledge, Cyber Security and Environmental Stewardship gives Girls the power to lead with courage, confidence and character, to help make the world a better place."

The new programming for girls in grades 6–12 includes:

Environmental Stewardship badges, GSUSA's first-ever badge series focused on environmental advocacy. Girls in grades 6–12 prepare for outdoor experiences and take action on environmental issues. Although Girl Scouts have been advocating for the environment since the organization's founding 106 years ago, these badges are the first to specifically prepare girls to be environmental advocates who address problems, find solutions, and protect the natural world (funded by the Elliott Wildlife Values Project).

MORE



Badges that teach girls how to program, design, and showcase robots, completing the suite of Robotics badges GSUSA first introduced for grades K–5 last year.

The College Knowledge badge for Girl Scouts in grades 11 and 12, the first badge completely dedicated to college exploration. By showing girls how to research the admissions process, financial aid, and other factors, the badge fills a specific need that girls asked for—and that many do not have support for outside Girl Scouts.

Two Girl Scout Leadership Journeys: Think Like a Programmer (funded by Raytheon) provides a strong foundation in computational thinking and the framework for Girl Scouts' first ever national Cyber Challenge, coming in 2019. The Think Like an Engineer Journey exposes girls to design thinking to understand how engineers solve problems. As with all Leadership Journeys, girls complete hands-on activities and use their newly honed skills to take action on a problem in their community. The programming aims to prepare girls to pursue careers in fields such as cybersecurity, computer science, and robotics.

Girls in grades K–5 can now earn badges in:

Environmental Stewardship, through which girls learn how to respect the outdoors and take action to protect the natural world (funded by the Elliott Wildlife Values Project).

Cybersecurity, introducing girls to age-appropriate online safety and privacy principles, information on how the internet works, and how to spot and investigate cybercrime (funded by Palo Alto Networks).

Space Science, enabling girls to channel their inner NASA scientist as they learn about objects in space and how astronomers conduct investigations (funded by NASA's Science Mission Directorate and led by the SETI Institute).

Mechanical Engineering for Girl Scout Juniors, through which girls in grades 4 and 5 design paddle boats, cranes, and balloon-powered cars, learning about buoyancy, potential and kinetic energy, machines, and jet propulsion. Following last year's introduction of Mechanical Engineering badges for girls in grades K–3, the addition of these badges for Girl Scout Juniors means that all Girl Scouts in elementary school can now have hands-on engineering experiences.

"Across the country, people are having powerful conversations about the increasingly strong voice of young people who want to change the world and the lack of women in leadership positions in the United States—two topics Girl Scouts is uniquely positioned to address," said GSUSA CEO Sylvia Acevedo. "Whether they are fighting cybercrime, exploring how engineers solve problems, or advocating for issues affecting their community, Girl Scouts are learning how to proactively address some of the foremost challenges of today while also building skills that will set them up for a lifetime of leadership. I am so proud that our new programming continues to push girls to be forward-thinking and equips them with the skills they need to make the world a better place. We believe in the power of all girls, and we invite them to strengthen their unique abilities by joining Girl Scouts."



GSUSA works with top organizations in fields that interest today's girls. Combined with Girl Scouts' expertise in girl leadership, these organizations and specialists advise and inform on content to provide the most cutting-edge programming available to girls. Content collaborators include Code.org, the Cyber Innovation Center, robotics educator and author Kathy Ceceri, the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, the Museum of Science, Boston, and WGBH's Design Squad Global. Girl Scouts themselves also rigorously tested some of the new offerings, including the Think Like a Programmer activities and the Space Science and Cybersecurity badges, which were announced last year and are now available for girls around the country to earn.

Prepare your girl to unleash her inner strength. To join or volunteer, visit www.girlscouts.org/join.

About GSCCC

Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast serves over 10,200 girls across six counties and is committed to making the Girl Scout Leadership Experience available to girls in ways that impact their lives both in the moment and into the future. Girls participate in troops, individual projects, council events, day camps, resident camps and more. A variety of leadership, outdoor skills, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) based programs and events provide girls with opportunities to learn and explore in fun and informative ways. To join or volunteer in Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara or Ventura County, visit: <http://www.girlscoutscoc.org>.

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