



23 New STEM and Outdoor Badges Enrich Girl Scout Programming, Which Data Shows Helps Girls Excel in Life

With additional STEM and outdoor content for girls, available to troop leaders via a “digital assistant,” Girl Scouts makes it easier and more impactful to ignite the power of every girl.

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July 25, 2017

Dallas, Texas—Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas (GSNETX) and Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) today release new badges in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and the outdoors, areas girls are not typically encouraged to explore outside of Girl Scouting. The badges will debut on the organization’s first digital platform for volunteers, making it more accessible than ever to unleash the power of every girl.

At a time when 81 percent of American voters think [preparing girls for leadership roles should be a national priority](#), GSUSA—the preeminent leadership development organization for girls—offers girls even more opportunities to learn skills and empower themselves with the experiences they need to succeed in life. And as the Girl Scout Research Institute releases [new findings](#) that confirm the outstanding leadership outcomes that Girl Scouts exhibit compared to their non-Girl Scout peers, there has never been a better time to [join](#).

New Programming in STEM and the Outdoors

Through hands-on and age-appropriate experiences for girls as young as five, Girl Scouts is both enhancing the important outdoor opportunities the organization is known for and addressing the lack of exposure many girls have to STEM. In fact, Girl Scouts are almost twice as likely as non-Girl Scouts to participate in STEM (60 percent versus 35 percent) and outdoor activities (76 percent versus 43 percent). With the introduction of 23 new badges, which marks the largest programming rollout in almost a decade, Girl Scouts can design robots and racecars, go on environmentally conscious camping trips, write code, collect data in the great outdoors, try their hand at engineering, and so much more. GSUSA created select badges with contributions from notable organizations in the STEM and outdoor industries, such as GoldieBlox, WGBH/Design Squad, Society of Women Engineers, Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, Code.org, and SciStarter.

Locally, Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas will be incorporating the new STEM badges into programs offered at the STEM Center of Excellence at Camp Whispering Cedars in Dallas, TX – a 92 acre living laboratory focused on introducing girls to STEM careers, providing hands-on experiences, developing leadership skills through practical application of learnings and fostering mentorships with women in STEM industries to help close the women in STEM career pipeline problem.

The new Girl Scout programming builds girls' skills and encourages their interest in STEM and environmental conservation from an early age, increasing their confidence in these areas—in an all-girl environment where they feel comfortable trying new things, taking appropriate risks, and learning from failure. For more information about the new badges, visit www.girlscouts.org/ourprogram.

Girl Scouts Excel in Important Aspects of Life

A new report from the Girl Scout Research Institute, [*The Girl Scout Impact Study*](#), shows that participating in Girl Scouts helps girls develop key leadership skills they need to be successful in life. Compared to their peers, Girl Scouts are more likely than non-Girl Scouts to be leaders because they:

- Have confidence in themselves and their abilities (80% vs. 68%)
- Act ethically and responsibly, and show concern for others (75% vs. 59%)
- Seek challenges and learn from setbacks (62% vs. 42%)
- Develop and maintain healthy relationships (60% vs. 43%)
- Identify and solve problems in their communities (57% vs. 28%)
- Take an active role in decision making (80% vs. 51%)

Importantly, what girls gain through Girl Scouting positively affects all areas of their lives. For example, Girl Scouts do better than their non-Girl Scout peers in the classroom, earning better grades and aspiring to higher educational attainment, and are more likely to seek careers in STEM, law, and business—industries in which women are underrepresented. And the benefits of Girl Scouting are not exclusive to any particular demographic, which means that no matter where girls live or what their age or background, Girl Scouts can help them develop to their full potential and excel in all aspects of life.

Digitizing the Volunteer Experience

The new Girl Scout program elements are now available to more members than ever before via the recently expanded Volunteer Toolkit, Girl Scouts' first "digital assistant" for troop leaders and parents, allowing them to more easily plan meetings and activities, keep track of important information, and, ultimately, make it easier to support amazing experiences for girls. In the toolkit, most Girl Scout programming for girls in grades K–5 is auto-populated so that troop leaders can view activity plans and necessary materials, customize meeting plans, track troop finances, and more, all in one place. Further, the instructions that are included throughout make subjects that might otherwise intimidate some volunteers—like STEM—accessible and understandable, so that they can confidently lead troop activities.

"At Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, we are committed to being the very best organization to help girls thrive in the 21st century. With these new offerings from Girl Scouts of the USA, we are able to deliver the outstanding and relevant programming that our girls need and want," said Jennifer Bartkowski, CEO of Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas. "These new badges come alive at our new \$14M STEM Center of Excellence in South Dallas, where we are combining STEM and the outdoors to deliver programming that will change the workforce pipeline in North Texas. Here in Northeast Texas, girls have more options within Girl Scouts than ever before!"

"At Girl Scouts, we believe there is a wellspring of passion, determination, and courage residing within every girl—and our organization offers a nurturing environment where she can develop skills to unleash her potential," said GSUSA CEO Sylvia Acevedo. "Data shows Girl Scouts

excel in life because of our innovative programming, so we've expanded our offerings to include even more engaging, fun, and impactful activities for girls of all ages—including Daisies as young as five years old. We've also simplified the process for volunteers through our online Volunteer Toolkit. Simply put, Girl Scouts is on the cusp of a leadership renaissance for girls, and we're always looking for more go-getters, innovators, risk-takers, and leaders to enhance our ranks. Join now for a lifetime of opportunities that champion the power of every girl."

Through Girl Scouting, girls learn to face challenges head-on, embrace failure as a learning opportunity, create lasting relationships, and find dynamic solutions to social issues—all while building the skills and courage they need to take the lead every day and empower themselves for life. To join or volunteer, visit www.girlscouts.org/join.

About Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas

Girl Scouts is the premier leadership development organization for girls. Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas serves more than 26,000 girls and 12,500 adults in 32 northeast Texas counties. Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas recently received the Center for Nonprofit Management nonprofit of the year award in 2016. The board is chaired by Kit Addleman, partner at Haynes and Boone, who was recognized by both the *Dallas Business Journal* and Center for Nonprofit Management nonprofit board chair of the year awards in 2016. For information on how to join, volunteer, donate or reconnect to the Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, call (800) 442-2260 or visit www.gsnetx.org.

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