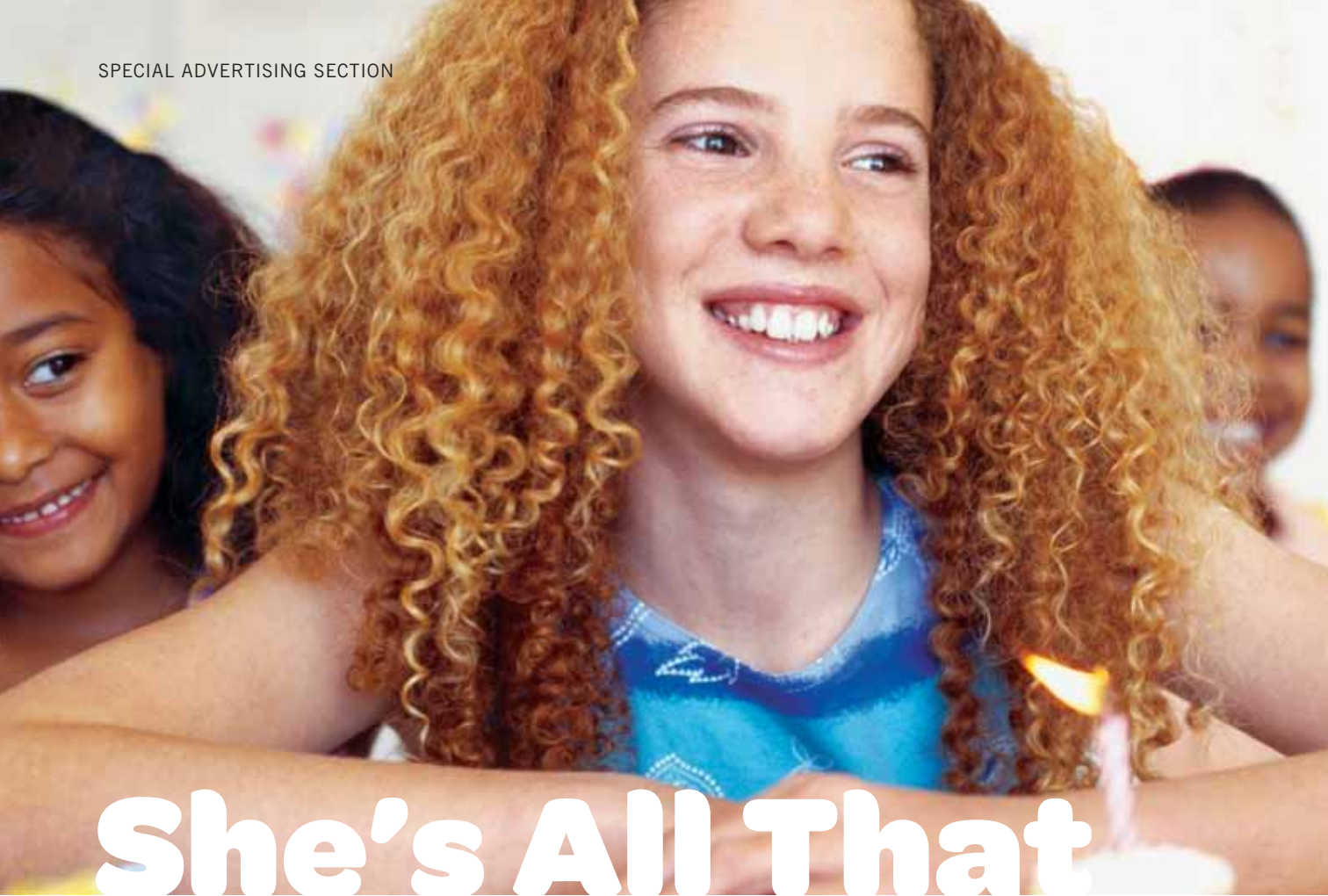


During its centennial year, the Girl Scouts launches the boldest advocacy campaign dedicated to girl causes in this nation's history

Girl Power



girl scouts
1912-2012



She's All That



The **Girl Scouts** of the United States (GSUSA) wants you. And your daughter. And your husband, brother or uncle. In fact, you don't even have to join them or wear a green sash, much less earn badges and sell cookies. All the organization is asking for as its 100th birthday present this year is that you pick a girl, any girl, in green or not, and support her hopes and dreams. ♪

Why? Anna Maria Chávez, the CEO of GSUSA, doesn't sputter when asked why this is her organization's dearest wish, but she has every reason to. Self-image: 59% of girls believe the fashion industry makes them feel fat. Self-confidence: Only one in five girls believe they have what it takes to lead. Women at the top: Only 3.6% of CEOs of Fortune 500 companies are women, according to The White House Project Report and Catalyst.

"There is a shortage of women in leadership roles, and it will take a lot of resources to address it. We have to advocate on behalf of girls. But we're not paying attention when it comes to girls. When you look at where philanthropic donations go, we give more to animal issues than girl issues," says Chávez.

That's why she has declared this year the Year of the Girl and unveiled a bold plan to raise \$1 billion to reach more girls. GSUSA has also launched a cause campaign called ToGetHerThere, with a goal that is both audacious and specific: to narrow the leadership gap between

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21%

Just one in five girls believe they have what it takes to lead

SOURCE: ROPER RESEARCH

men and women in a single generation.

Corporate America is also feeling a sense of urgency. “The more diversity we have among leaders, the better the range of ideas and answers that result. So it’s important for women to achieve greater leadership, and it’s really important for the economy,” says Cathy Coughlin, the global marketing officer for AT&T and a former Girl Scout. Dove, a Unilever brand, is focusing on the power of role models in changing girls’ futures while inspiring them to reach their full potential. “We believe that everyone has an opportunity to make a difference in a girl’s self-esteem,” says Rob Candelino, vice president, brand building, for Unilever’s U.S. skin-care business.

But is Girl Scouts really the outfit to tackle this job in an era when iron-edged sharp elbows seem more useful than Pollyanna-ish personalities? Turns out GSUSA has a pretty spectacular track record at producing leaders. Sixty-nine percent of female U.S. Senators, 67% of female members of the House of Representatives and 80% of female business owners were Girl Scouts.

GSUSA’s secret sauce? Skill-building activities for earning badges that encompass three key features: hands-on experiential learning, girl-led choices and coop-

erative engagement. Eighteen-year-old Vrinda Agarwal’s trajectory as a Girl Scout illustrates the power of those experiences. After her family emigrated from India to Sacramento, Vrinda had a tough adjustment, and by second grade she had become extremely shy. She joined a Girl Scout troop because its activities involved “doing something fun, but at the end of a project they also gave back to the community,” she recalls.

Fast-forward to high school, when Vrinda felt moved by the plight of Bhutanese refugees in Sacramento. She decided helping them would be her Girl Scout Gold Award project, which is the top achievement in Girl Scouts. Before

GIRL SCOUTS

The Incredible Journey

Since the first Girl Scout meeting in 1912, the national organization ranks have swelled to the millions, but its mission today remains the same: instill in girls the ideals of ethics, community service, leadership and independence.

1913



Girl Scouts developed its own uniform and handbook, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, constitution and bylaws

1915



Organization incorporated as Girl Scouts Inc.

1925

First Girl Scout Troops on Foreign Soil established in China, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and Syria



1936

The first time the Girl Scouts licensed commercially baked cookies



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Helping girls reach their full leadership potential in one generation is now an urgent issue on the national agenda

she could embark, though, the GSUSA protocol required her to jump through a number of hoops, including shadowing a doctor and logging service hours in a field completely different from her project's focus. Finally, she created a club called R.E.S.P.E.C.T. at her high school, overcoming the initial resistance of the school's club manager. She recruited volunteers and a few trained professionals to teach weekend classes, such as Job Skills, Teen Issues and Intro to Biology, to approximately 25 refugee ages 10 to 25 during her sophomore and junior years.

The formerly timid girl also became a national level debater and is now a freshman at the University of California at Berkeley. "I do credit Girl Scouts," she says. "You go from participating in events like a volunteer autism walk to helping organize them and then leading these large-scale events. It developed skills that I did not know I had within me."

Despite such successes, after nearly 100 years, GSUSA's secret sauce for building leaders needed modernization. Seeing declining membership and recognizing that it competes with a host of activities available to girls today, the organization in 2004 began to take a hard look at its structure, its image and, most important, its effectiveness with girls. The result was a top-to-bottom revamping that marries its time-tested strengths to new programs.

In addition to visually updating its brand imagery and restructuring the regional councils that oversee membership activities, Chávez plans to dramatically grow the number of Girl Scouts from the current 2.3 million—or 8% of the country's girls 5 through 17—by broadening scouting's accessibility. Now there's an alternative to the traditional troop-member experience. In what is called the "series pathway," a

Junior Girl Scout in Phoenix, for example, might first participate in a six-week pre-Columbian art series and then attend a winter Girl Scouts camp, but then opt to take the spring off so she can play on her school's lacrosse team. There are six new series, one of which is virtual. GSUSA also plans to achieve greater breadth by proactively venturing into communities where Girl Scouts have not been active, particularly targeting the fast-growing Hispanic population.

But GSUSA's hardest-hitting modification goes straight to the heart of Girl Scout development: a full-bore overhaul of the badges girls can earn, as well as the way they work for them. There are 136 new badges, many of them geared to the annual cookie-selling program, an enterprise that raises \$760 million a year through the sale of 207 million boxes of cookies—the biggest entrepreneurial program in the country for girls.

JOHN PATRICK NAUGHTON, GIRL SCOUTS

1937

1956

1985

1996

2012

Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace in Savannah opened as a house museum



Girl Scouts went on the World Wide Web and started online meetings

Year of the Girl

The Girl Scout program divided into three groups—Brownie, Intermediate and Senior—to enhance service and age-appropriate activities

The Contemporary Issues series was developed to help girls and their families deal with serious social issues such as *Say No to Drugs* in collaboration with a project by First Lady Nancy Reagan



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By eighth grade, only half as many girls as boys are interested in math, science, and engineering careers. If each of us gives a girl our time and support today, she can find the courage, confidence, and character she'll need to build a better tomorrow.

**YEAR
OF THE
GIRL**


“Scouting rises within you and inspires you to put forth your best”

—Juliette G. Low



Once primarily a fund-raising and community-building effort, the cookie program is now a finely tuned skill accelerator that teaches girls how to set goals, make decisions, manage money, interact with people and uphold business ethics. Every badge takes five steps to complete and ends with a scout stating three ways she might choose to deploy her new skill.

For a 5-year-old Daisy to win a Cookie Activity Pin, cookie season is all about the number of boxes she wants to sell. But five years later a Junior Girl Scout must take a 360-degree view of her cookie operation as a business, with a supplier, customers, products, revenue and profits, to earn a Cookie Business Badge. By the time a high schooler is a Senior Girl Scout, she might earn a Philanthropy Award by evaluating her troop's options for reinvesting profits into the community, considering how they might benefit a homeless shelter, for example, vs. a food pantry.

“When the glow of being a brand-new Girl Scout is over, you start to see girls emerge with bigger ideas. They go from ‘I can't wait to sell Girl Scout cookies’ to ‘I want to sell because I want to learn how to meet people, how to make a telephone call and how to make money,’” says Amanda Hamaker, manager of GSUSA's national product sales. In addition to writing business plans and planning their portfolio of investments for the cookie program, Girl Scouts are gaining financial literacy, an essential expertise for C-suite jobs, through innovative programs that, for example, take high school Girl Scouts through a real-life mortgage application process in order to understand their creditworthiness and earn a Financial Literacy Badge.

GSUSA's other large stake in the ground is that it's holding itself accountable for hatching leaders to a degree that wasn't possible before. Every Girl Scout, from a 5-year-old Daisy to a 17-year-old Girl Scout Senior, now completes a “leadership journey” requiring her to explore three components of leadership: self-discovery,

DID YOU KNOW?



Girl Scouts number nearly

3.2 MILLION

2.3 million girl members and 887,758 adult members—and growing

connecting with others and taking action to make the world a better place. GSUSA has identified 15 outcomes, or benefits, that it, its councils and volunteer leaders will use to measure its success in producing leaders.

So pick a girl—any girl—and encourage her for something other than her looks. Of course, Chávez will be delighted if you want to do this as a volunteer or troop leader. But she knows the problem is too big for any one organization to solve on its own, so she urges all adults to join her cause. “Why are girls opting out of bold, audacious roles?” she asks. “We need them

around the table. I would sleep better if I knew we were bringing more minds to the table for solutions.”

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