

You belong
here.



2022–2023 Annual Report

Girl Scouts of
Northern Illinois

CEO Welcome

Hello, friends! I feel like our bridging Daisy Girl Scouts because I have just completed my first full membership year with GSNI. October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023, was a year packed with exciting events, noteworthy work, and meaningful partnerships. I have been grateful for every moment!

Much like a Daisy Girl Scout, I love a good fun patch! (What Girl Scout doesn't?) So, one of my first official acts as GSNI CEO was the creation of a new Meet the CEO fun patch. With the help of our fantastic Retail Team, I selected images of cookies, travel, books, and lifelong friendship for the new patch. Every single Girl Scout who meets me can receive this free patch! Many of our members have taken advantage of this opportunity, but I still have many patches to share. Don't hesitate to say "Hello!" and receive your fun patch. I carry them everywhere!

I handed out patches at several events this year, and I'd like to thank every troop, group, and service unit that asked me to attend their special gatherings. Some of my favorite events this year included camporee with Park North Stateline Service Unit, Santa's Workshop with Lee Service Unit, higher award ceremony with Geneva Service Unit, bridging with Kaskaskia Service Unit, investiture and rededication with Arapaho Service Unit, and cookie kickoffs with Chippewa and Whiteside/Carroll Service Units. Thank you for these invitations to connect with our Girl Scouts and their families!

In October, I cherished the opportunity to attend my first-ever GSNI Fall Fest at Camp McCormick. It was an amazing day for outdoor activities for the whole family, including a corn maze and pumpkin painting. There's nothing like fall in the Midwest, and no one I'd rather celebrate it with than my Girl Scout community.

While we experienced a challenging cookie season this membership year, I was enthusiastic to visit cookie booths across our council, witnessing Girl Scout entrepreneurial skills in action. I am most proud of the



amazing service projects funded by individual Girl Scout and troop cookie proceeds. Our GSNI Girl Scouts consistently put others first and take care of their communities.

We listened to feedback from our leaders, our Girl Scouts, and their families who wanted fun, kid-friendly places to hang out while shopping or visiting in our Resource Centers. Thanks to our hard-working Property Team, we were able to start with a refresh to our South Elgin space with a building-block wall, photo-booth wings, and creator space for artistic kids to get creative (and get some wiggles out!).

One of my favorite projects was the installation of our own Build-A-Bear Workshop! After months of planning, construction, and painting, our workshop launched with a fantastic grand opening. Our Build-A-Bear Workshop will not only provide a new revenue stream for GSNI and innovative space for our members; it also connects us with our local community, as it is open to everyone!

It was a season of construction this past year, with not only our



Resource Center refresh and Build-A-Bear installation, but also over \$100,000 in renovations to our beloved Mary Ann Beebe Center (MABC). I tell everyone that camping is one of my favorite parts of being a Girl Scout, and it was my honor to attend the official ribbon cutting for MABC's Adventure Walk in the fall.

Speaking of camp, I'm proud to tell you I have received my official GSNI camp name! While visiting with our amazing Counselors-in-Training this past summer, I asked for their help in finding just the right camp name. I told them lots of stories, but they latched on to my love of the Spanish food, Tortilla de Patata, which I discovered during my time in Spain. So, if you're ever at one of our camps and are looking for me, just ask around for "Tortilla". I had such a great time talking with so many campers and watching them discover and play in our gorgeous camps.

We opened our first-ever Maker Space at Camp Dean in the spring! Many people turned out for "Tech Camp" opening day as Girl Scouts, families, friends, and donors enjoyed exploring 3D printers, robotics, embroidery machines, and more. Congratulations to our own Gold Award Girl Scout Kaitlin L. for achieving her dream and completing such an ambitious Gold Award project. We are also very grateful to the Grand Victoria Riverboat Fund and Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley for the grants which generously funded this project.

I learned how much I know (and don't know) about the 80s and 90s at our first-ever adults-only Totally Tubular Trivia Night fundraiser. Parents, volunteers, and trivia-lovers from all over the council joined us for a night out with Girl Scout Cookie-inspired specialty drinks and appetizers. All proceeds raised supported membership, program, and camp access for current and potential GSNI Girl Scouts.

It was truly an honor to travel to my first National Council Session in Orlando. I was grateful to serve as a delegate and spend time with our amazing council delegates. Most importantly, I was able to watch our three youth delegates represent GSNI with courage, confidence, and character, as they stepped up to the microphone in a room full of 10,000 Girl Scouts and visitors!

There are many young, powerful GSNI Girl Scouts I have met and especially appreciate, such as our Associate Youth Board Members Kaitlin, Nadia, Myah, and Anna. These Girl Scouts have brought strong insight and their vision to our Board of Directors. We are thankful for their leadership.

I believe our most important work is making every



person feel welcome at GSNI. This belief is shared by our supportive Board of Directors, our staff, volunteers, and the community members who sit on our Belonging Team. In March, we transitioned several of our previous Action Teams and Task Forces to subgroups of our Belonging Team. This has allowed us to create common goals, gather regularly, and share ideas we know will change the face of Girl Scouts for the better.

In addition, we increased our internal focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), access, and racial justice with the creation of the Chief of Belonging and Brand position within our staff structure. I was personally able to take part in leading special ceremonies for GSNI's Latinas Taking the Lead and Black Women Taking the Lead initiatives, and it is something I will never forget. I am looking forward to watching these groups continue to blossom and flourish here at GSNI and in our local areas.

All the work we do here at GSNI would not be possible without our volunteers. I want to take a moment to recognize each one of them. I'd like to thank each volunteer for their selfless service, their investment in Girl Scouts, their hard work, their time, and the generous sharing of themselves with the next generation.

Our founder Juliette Low said it best, "The work of today is the history of tomorrow, and we are its makers." GSNI welcomes all of today's makers—makers of materials, makers of change, makers of ideas, makers of more than we can ever imagine. Join us, identify with us, grow with us, and together we will be the force that changes history.

You belong here.



Dr. Kari Rockwell
CEO, Girl Scouts
of Northern Illinois

Board Chair Welcome



In my years as GSNI Board Chair, I have been privileged to see many Girl Scout dreams come true. I have seen Girl Scouts accomplish goals they never thought possible. I've seen troop leaders cultivate leadership and new skills, and I've seen small, hard-working service units grow into big, flourishing (still hard-working!) communities. GSNI is a place where ideas start as dreams and become reality through perseverance, creativity, and ingenuity.

Just a few years ago, it seemed like creating a comprehensive atmosphere of belonging—across our populations of diverse races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, and religions—was this kind of dream. I have watched in wonder as our Girl Scouts, volunteers, staff, and board members rose to meet this challenge.

One by one, they joined our Belonging Team. They worked together to craft our first-ever Belonging statement. They instituted opportunities of cultural appreciation, such as attending Native American powwows, offering programming around Día de los Muertos, and providing resources for Pride Month activities. Since its beginning, Girl Scouts has always been a place for acceptance. Our Belonging Team continues to uphold this Mission by ensuring everyone has a place at Girl Scouts. I would like to thank each member of this team. We are so grateful for you!

This membership year produced several notable achievements! One of my favorites was GSNI's participation in a national pilot program of providing new Daisy Girl Scout (K-1) troop leaders with a monthly supply box filled with step-by-step instructions, ready-to-go supplies, and thoughtful script suggestions. Through this box, these Girl Scout volunteers received

everything they needed to lead their first troop meeting!

We also saw our day and overnight camp attendance numbers soar, after a long uphill climb following the pandemic. Our camps received much needed improvements across the board with updated buildings, new outdoor spaces, safety upgrades, and our stunning new Maker Space at Camp Dean. We didn't stop with our camps! The indoor space at our South Elgin Resource center was refreshed with relaxed, family-friendly surroundings and kid-approved activities. We also launched a Build-A-Bear Workshop open to everyone—not just Girl Scouts—in this location.

My Girl Scout journey has included time as both a staff member and a volunteer. This means I know what kind of people volunteer for Girl Scouts. I have been honored to see the character, courage, and confidence of our volunteers throughout the years. It takes a special kind of person who is willing to invest their time, their talent, and often their hard-earned funds into inspiring the leaders of tomorrow. Nothing we do here at GSNI would be possible without our volunteers. They are the heartbeat of Girl Scouts. Whether you are a brand-new volunteer or a seasoned leader, please know that you are deeply valued. Thank you!

I'd like to sign off by saying something I believe with all my heart. I know GSNI has a great future, because there is no group of people more passionate about their Mission than Girl Scouts. I know this because I am one.

You belong here with us!



Dana Vierck
Board Chair, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois



Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois Belonging Statement

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois draws inspiration from our Girl Scout Promise and Law in our Belonging Statement. Being a member of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois means you are part of a community of diverse races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, and religions. We commit to providing an equitable and accessible Girl Scout Leadership Experience to all Girl Scouts in our council. We are champions for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access.

These are our promises to you:

- ◆ We will listen and seek to understand from diverse voices and experiences. We will act on what we have learned.
- ◆ We will offer a culture of welcoming and belonging to all members, potential members, and community partners of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois.
- ◆ We will provide brave and safe spaces for Girl Scouts to participate with us. Members can expect to be themselves in a secure and respectful environment.
- ◆ We will incorporate the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility at all levels of our movement.
- ◆ We believe every member (youth and adult) of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois should have respect and acceptance in our organization.
- ◆ We commit to a journey of being an anti-racist and anti-oppressive organization.
- ◆ We welcome you to join us in our movement and mission.

You belong here.



GSNI Belonging

GSNI's multicultural and welcoming action teams and task forces came together in Spring 2023. Our Community Engagement, Engaging Black Families, Hispanic Engagement, LGBTQ+, Native American, and Recruitment teams started meeting together to share resources and ideas. The dynamic group also joined together to write our Belonging Statement, which establishes expectations for current and potential members and community members to be welcomed by GSNI.

GSNI staff took Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Racial Justice (DEIRJ) training this summer, presented by Girl Scouts of the USA. This training involved discussions about how to have genuine and open conversations, accommodate a variety of needs, and techniques on how to process and react to difficult situations. After training, staff would gather to reflect on how to apply learnings in day-to-day work. Staff report being more conscious and deliberate on communicating with members, potential members,

the community, and each other. This also spurred staff to have conversations about DEIRJ with one another in an open and honest way, driving a better understanding of each other and where they are coming from.



GSNI Highlights

The Communication and Brand Awareness Team

This team joined forces with the Older Girl Scout Team to develop a Media Fair event. The Media Fair serves two purposes: to provide relevant programming for GSNI Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador members and to encourage members to share their Girl Scout story in a variety of ways.



Community Programs

GSNI's Community Programs Team strives to make Girl Scouts accessible to diverse populations across northern Illinois, particularly in communities historically underserved by Girl Scouts. Programming continued to grow in Membership Year 2023, with 1,070 young people participating through staff-led and staff-supported troops. This included programs led by AmeriCorps members in Aurora, Elgin, Hanover Park, and Streamwood, staff-led Project Opportunity troops in Rockford, and staff-supported troops focused on the Hispanic communities in Elgin and Aurora. Troops completed badge work on topics like mental health

and wellness—using GSUSA's Resilient. Ready. Strong. program—financial literacy, space science, and more.

GSNI was especially excited to see our Project Opportunity program return to lunchtime sites at Rockford schools. These groups had not met since prior to the pandemic. This return set the stage for even more growth in the upcoming membership year. In addition, staff-led troops continued to build relationships with the Girl Scouts, families, and communities, offering new opportunities like a bridging ceremony for Girl Scouts and families in Aurora, as well as participation in local community service projects like a river clean-up day.

The Hispanic Engagement team continued to grow the Latinas Taking the Lead program this membership year. This six-session program is a transformative journey for Hispanic women who are interested in learning about themselves and being leaders in their own lives and communities. Sessions covered topics including navigating the education system, effective communication, healthy habits, financial literacy,



community resources, and personal and professional development.

GSNI hosted two additional Latinas Taking the Lead programs in Elgin and Harvard, with the Harvard Community Unit School District 50 helping recruit and support 20 participants for their cohort. The Hispanic Engagement team also continued to develop and host additional community and cultural programs, such as events celebrating and educating Girl Scouts on Día de los Muertos, a volunteer appreciation event for Spanish-preferred volunteers, and more.

GSNI's Community Programs Specialist focused on engaging the Black community in Rockford and continued to grow the team's work this membership year, working with passionate facilitators to renew and expand the Black Women Taking the Lead program. The inaugural cohort held their celebration in October 2022, with an additional cohort meeting in Spring 2023. In particular, schools began to express interest in the Black Women Taking the Lead program as a resource for families, giving GSNI an opportunity to continue to build and strengthen relationships with Rockford schools and families who have long been served through the Project Opportunity program.

Recruitment

The goal of GSNI's Recruitment Team is to invite new individuals to join the Girl Scout Movement through a national membership program. One way this was accomplished in 2022–23 was by inviting potential Girl Scouts and their families to attend a variety of events

where they could explore all Girl Scouts has to offer and the many ways to participate!

GSNI's Recruitment Team focused on potential Girl Scouts in kindergarten through third grade, especially in communities where GSNI already had a strong presence. Members of the team then partnered with enthusiastic service unit volunteers to cover all the communities served by GSNI.

Through GSNI's three phases of recruitment, the team provided resources for back-to-school nights, community events, parades, school activities, and trunk-or-treat gatherings throughout the fall recruitment season. A Valentine Challenge was created in the new year to encourage service units to add more members to existing troops while continuing to start new troops. In February, the second-ever Fall in Love with Girl Scouts Cookies & Cocoa event premiered at all GSNI's Resource Centers which rounded out the winter recruitment events. Through annual Daisy Launch and Extended Year Membership recruitment events, potential Girl Scouts in pre-kindergarten through third grade received the opportunity to unlock a mystery with unicorn and My Little Pony parties. These themes allowed GSNI to align with GSUSA's national campaigns to help form new troops.

Throughout the year, GSNI's Recruitment Team researched Girl Scout market shares, local schools, and potential advances within the council's service area while talking with volunteers, Service Unit Managers, and Service Unit teams about recruitment prospects and needs within each community. Team members focus on analyzing overall goals while building a solid base to foster growth for GSNI's service units. This year, the team also revised many communication assets, streamlining them



Product Program

GSNI Girl Scouts proudly participated in the 2022 Fall Product Program by selling nuts, candy, and magazine subscriptions. Through participation in product programs, these Girl Scouts practiced and honed their life skills, including goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics. Girl Scouts also collected donations locally for 8,550 cans of honey roasted peanuts which were donated to active military and veterans.

The 2022–23 Cookie Program faced several challenges for GSNI Girl Scouts, parents, and volunteers. The Digital Cookie platform was not available for customers to place shipped orders until the end of February. Even with this challenge, GSNI was able to offer a multi-modal cookie program. The Digital Cookie platform provided the opportunity for Girl Scouts to learn more about e-commerce and running a business in today's world, as well as earn entrepreneurial badges.

Girl Scouts continued to be creative and resourceful throughout the program to meet their goals!

Additionally, GSNI Girl Scouts distributed almost 40,000 packages of donated cookies to first responders, essential workers, community organizations, and military and veteran organizations through the Gift of Caring initiative.

Volunteer Development

GSNI's onboarding process for new volunteers continued to grow in the 2022–23 membership year. As GSNI modified processes to be more volunteer friendly, the Volunteer Resource Department restructured into the Volunteer Development Department and welcomed a second staff member to the team.

With combined efforts, the newly formed Volunteer Development Team provided virtual opportunities for new volunteers to learn about GSNI and how to use several important platforms while getting started with their volunteer role. This helped volunteers feel more confident with training and starting with their troops, while continuing to work with GSNI's Recruitment Specialists to grow their troop. GSNI's Member Support Team also supported new volunteers and troops after they opened their bank account and were ready to



to be more welcoming to all youth, while engaging diverse communities to connect additional families to Girl Scouts.

In May 2023, GSNI applied and was one of fourteen Girl Scout councils chosen across the country to participate in a national pilot program providing new Daisy Girl Scout troop leaders with an amazing resource! New Daisy troop leaders in participating pilot councils received a monthly supply box filled with step-by-step instructions, ready-to-go supplies, and more to help deliver first year Daisy troop meetings. This complimentary resource started in Fall 2023, followed the Daisy First Year Troop Plan, and was shipped directly to new troop leaders. GSNI also provided these volunteers with training and support throughout the implementation of this new program.

Connections were strengthened with local school districts as GSNI attended the Illinois Association of School Boards for the first time! In May, the Recruitment Team also entered discussions with the Harlem School District in Rockford regarding exciting potential opportunities to collaborate. In addition, the team built relationships with school districts council-wide in creating an all-in Girl Scout recruitment effort, with the participation of all GSNI staff members in going to local schools and communities promoting Girl Scouts for the new membership year!

begin meeting with Girl Scouts.

GSUSA updated the New Leader Onboarding training series, introducing two more courses: GSUSA New Leader Onboarding: The Girl Scout Cookie Program and GSUSA New Leader Onboarding: The Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Both courses assist new leaders and volunteers with necessary knowledge about the Girl Scout Cookie Program and the national Girl Scouting program. GSNI introduced these courses to volunteers as they were released with plans to require the courses in the upcoming year.

While GSNI continued to offer Red Cross trainings, this membership year brought an opportunity from GSUSA to train a GSNI staff member as an instructor to teach Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) for adults who work with youth. A grant through GSUSA was offered to support the initial training of 32 GSNI staff members to be trained as certified Youth Mental Health First Aiders. Earning this certification enables these staff members to identify potential and existing mental challenges in youth ages 5–18, while seeking measures to maintain safety for all in the vicinity, and to suggest or facilitate connection with professionals who can diagnose and treat those needing support. All certifications are for three years, and GSNI is committed to offering three or more YMHFA trainings per membership year.

As part of Volunteer Development’s collaboration with other departments, the team rolled out two patch programs to promote membership growth and volunteer development for members to earn. The Add-A-Friend patch program encourages both Girl Scouts and adult members to invite a friend to join Girl Scouts. Once the friend registers as a Girl Scout member, the Girl Scout or adult member who invited them receives a patch



and trefoil charm to add to their Girl Scout uniform! For every additional friend who joins Girl Scouts, the member receives another trefoil charm.

Volunteers were introduced to a second patch program to encourage skill education through training. In April 2023, GSNI’s Trained-to-Lead patch program rolled out with charms to be earned when completing Girl Scout Level or First Aid and CPR Certification training. Each volunteer who completes the qualified training receives the charm in the mail, along with the Trained-

to-Lead patch. More charms will be added for specific trainings in the future. Since the program started, more than 200 GSNI volunteers have earned the Trained-to-Lead patch and charms!

Select service units across GSNI offer volunteer-led camps each summer to bring Girl Scouts the opportunity to participate in a local camp experience. Each camp varies in the number of days it lasts, the time of day, where the camp takes place, and how many participants can be accommodated. Camps provide a variety of activities, crafts, field trips, team building, music, cooperative learning, cooking, badgework, high adventure, leadership opportunities, and much more!

The 2023 membership year included 15 camps ranging from one evening to five days with one overnight for larger groups. 75% percent of the camps welcomed Girl Scouts from outside their service unit to join their camp. Volunteers leading these camps provided unique camp experiences to over 1,800 Girl Scout youth!



Property

It was a great year for GSNI's Property Team, in part due to a big celebration for Mary Ann Beebe Center's 50th Anniversary in September! Girl Scouts, families, volunteers, former and current campers, and community members were invited to go hiking, participate in activities, and enjoy refreshments at the event. Activities included camp tours, the Bird Scavenger Hunt, archery, slingshots, mobile rock climbing wall, zipline, air rifles, and tomahawk throwing. GSNI also offered participants the opportunity to pre-order a specially designed event T-shirt!

Many successful grants, private donations, and gift-in-kind donations made it possible to significantly improve GSNI's three camp properties—including much-needed metal roofs for multiple buildings—this membership year.

A new Adventure Walk was created at Mary Ann Beebe Center to replace the previous Low Ropes Course, and space was carefully cultivated for a new Yurt Unit



at Camp McCormick. Camp Dean expanded its current solar panel array to cover two additional lodges near the pond, further offsetting the utilities cost of camp and using renewable energy.

A few of these additions were made possible through dedicated volunteers who traveled to GSNI's camps and helped with multiple tasks and projects. GSNI is extremely grateful for this assistance. GSNI Chief of Property and Program Officer Jason Jones says, "We would like to thank all the troops and Girl Scouts who chose to complete their Gold, Silver, or Bronze Award at our camps. It is inspiring to see Girl Scouts bring an idea to life and make a difference at their own camps!"

Resource Centers & Retail

The biggest update to our Resource Centers this membership year was the addition of a Build-A-Bear Workshop inside our South Elgin location. GSNI hosted a very well-attended Grand Opening event for the Build-A-Bear Workshop on September 23, 2023.

This new partnership offers the signature Build-A-Bear Make-Your-Own experience, with an assortment of furry friends that appeal to kids and adults alike. The GSNI location also carries beautiful Girl Scout-themed bears and a selection of Girl Scout-specific clothing and accessories. Through this Build-A-Bear Workshop, kids—and kids at heart—make their way through a hands-on, interactive process to create their very own, personalized furry friends.

With the help of a trained GSNI associate, each guest chooses a furry friend, stuffing it with love, and partaking in the signature heart ceremony. This location also provides a special Friendship Ceremony for Girl Scout-themed bears.



Since opening, GSNI has welcomed Girl Scouts from all over the council, along with their troops, for special parties and events. GSNI staff have also been delighted to meet “not yet” Girl Scouts and other neighbors as they visit the new shop!



Member Support

This membership year, the Member Support Team made a commitment to streamline processes to help volunteers. One example was simplifying the year-end financial report process by requiring less paperwork and adding an additional way to submit the report through the Volunteer Toolkit Finance Tab. The Service Unit Planning Packet was also reviewed and reorganized to create a more user-friendly version. Due

to an increase in behavior concerns, GSNI’s Incident Report form was divided into two forms— Incident and Accident—to



allow volunteers to report incidents and accidents according to the situation being shared. The team also began development on the GSNI Volunteer Policies Guide.

The President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) recognizes United States citizens and lawfully admitted permanent residents of the United States who have achieved a required number of hours of service during a specified time frame. GSNI saw a growth in the number of PVSA certified-recipients this membership year from 46 people and groups in 2021–22 to 88 people and groups in 2022–23.



GSNI’s Early Membership Renewal campaign begins each year on April 1. The Member Support Team led this initiative with decisions on new incentives, including a patch and troop monetary benefit. Troops could earn this benefit by registering at least 50% of their youth members and two adults during an allocated time. Service units were also tiered into small, medium, and large, so service unit incentives would be equitable for all participating.

Member retention strategies included the promotion of Honor Troop. Honor Troop guidelines provide troops—Girl Scouts and leaders—with a roadmap for the Girl Scout year. Following this roadmap leads to an exceptional experience and sets troops up for success. Thanks to this promotion, GSNI saw an increase in the number of troops earning Honor Troop. These troops were recognized by creating large posters and displaying them at each GSNI Resource Center.

Another retention strategy was encouraging service units to host third and fifth grade retention events. Girl Scouts who attend retention events actively learn about the next level of Girl Scouts from Girl Scouts in those grade levels, showcasing Girl Scouts’ proven girl-led process. 10 GSNI service units hosted third grade retention events, and 10 GSNI service units hosted fifth grade retention events!

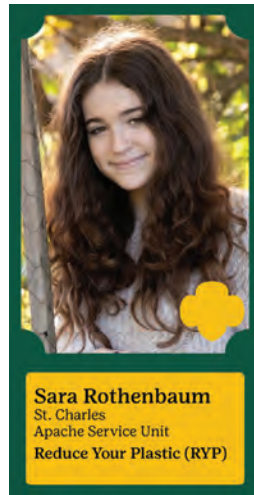
The Member Support Team also offered a networking Service Team Kick-Off at Camp Dean in August for Service Team Members across the council. Council staff members shared new information for the year, and volunteers could choose from sessions on Rallyhood, Conflict Management, and GSNI’s new Maker Space. A virtual event was held for those who could not attend in person.

Program

One way Girl Scouts make the world a better place is by leading and completing the Girl Scout Highest Awards. GSNI was proud to honor 17 Bronze Award Girl Scouts, 11 Silver Award Girl Scouts, and 10 Gold Award Girl Scouts in the 2022-23 membership year!

GSNI Girl Scout Sara Rothenbaum was selected as a GSUSA Gold Award Scholarship Recipient in 2022-23 for her Reduce Your Plastic Gold Award project. For her project, Sara focused on the need to reduce plastic consumption. She addressed this issue through increasing awareness of the consequences of over consumption, educating people on ways to use less plastic, and striving to motivate people to make the changes necessary to reduce their plastic usage.

Sara created a brochure entitled “Reduce Your Plastic” that described her project. The brochure included information



on the consequences of plastic pollution, as well as significant statistics on its impact on the environment and physical health. The last page included information on how to make a difference with tips to reduce plastic usage. In the “How to Get Involved” section, she included the addresses of her four related social media sites. To reach more people, Sara created videos and hosted workshops to share the information.

This membership year, GSNI’s Program Team held 180 council-sponsored programs which served over 3,882 participants. This included the team’s very first Brownie Journey Weekend where Brownie Girl Scouts worked towards earning the Wonders of Water and Outdoor Journey, and Cadette Girl Scouts challenged themselves to earn the Cadette LiA Award.

Brownie Girl Scouts were urged to complete a Take Action project on their own after the event. Girl Scout Leila decided to plant a tree for her Take Action project and create an informational board about water conservation to display at her local library. She checked out books from the library, gathered important facts

on water conservation, and suggested ways for people to conserve water. She took her board to the librarian and asked for permission to display it to help teach others. The library installed Leila’s board near the water fountains and bathrooms—exactly where people would be using water in the library!

In summer 2023, GSNI hosted seven weeks of camp at Camp Dean and three weeks of camp at Camp McCormick. Highlights included phenomenal international summer

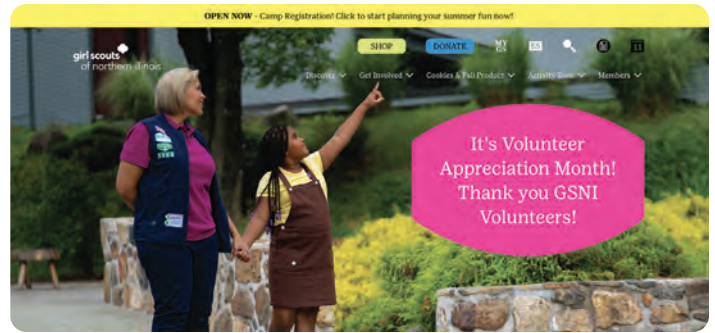


camp staff, the opening of the new Whitetail Lodge Maker Space at Camp Dean, and the installation of the New Horizons High Ropes Course at Camp McCormick. In total, 677 campers attended GSNI's 2023 summer camp programs, with 537 campers attending Camp Dean, and 140 campers attending Camp McCormick. In addition, 14 Counselors-in-Training received their awards at Camp Dean in June 2023.

Rallyhood

GSNI launched its use of the Rallyhood platform in April 2023. Rallyhood is an all-in-one platform that helps Girl Scout families, volunteers, and staff communicate with one another, share ideas, and collaborate on events and outings. Rallyhood eliminates the inefficiency of using fragmented apps to try to organize Girl Scout groups by bringing all the tools volunteers need together into one place. Feedback from volunteers, families, and staff has been positive overall with GSNI volunteers using the platform in new and innovative ways.

In particular, GSNI used Rallyhood as a safe, secure platform for GSNI camps to share photos and updates with families without any youth images or information compromised on an open social media platform. Families appreciated the protection Rallyhood offers, safeguarding GSNI youth from algorithms and the eyes of strangers. As of September 30, 2023, 2,205 people have engaged with GSNI on Rallyhood!



GSNI Website Restructure and Rebrand

In January of 2021, GSUSA introduced a Movement-wide rebranding campaign. The focus of the campaign was to increase brand consistency within Girl Scout councils nationwide. Full rebranding implementation was to be completed by 2023. As part of the refresh, GSUSA rebranded many national initiatives such as recruitment and renewal campaigns, council templates, council emails, social media channels, websites, and retail merchandise, including uniforms, badges, and product packaging.

GSNI trained staff to implement the new brand, including a rebrand of council communications and documentation while actively using the new brand in recruiting, retail, and product programs. The final rebranding project was GSNI's website. Migration from the old to the new website began in June 2023 and was completed in early September 2023.

GSNI's council website is part of GSUSA's Content Management System which is the foundation for web



content of most Girl Scout councils. While GSNI can update its website according to council needs, GSUSA maintains control of the overall content and structure. Individual Girl Scout councils, as part of the rebranding, needed to migrate their council information from old websites to newly restructured, rebranded websites created by GSUSA. This was quite a large project with over 100+ councils moving information!

Councils were required to sign up for a migration time slot with a team of GSUSA website migration experts overseeing each transition. GSNI's timeslot for migration was toward the end of the timeline, so implementation staff could see what other councils accomplished and glean ideas for the final look and structure of the website while maintaining GSUSA's template of a more accessible platform.

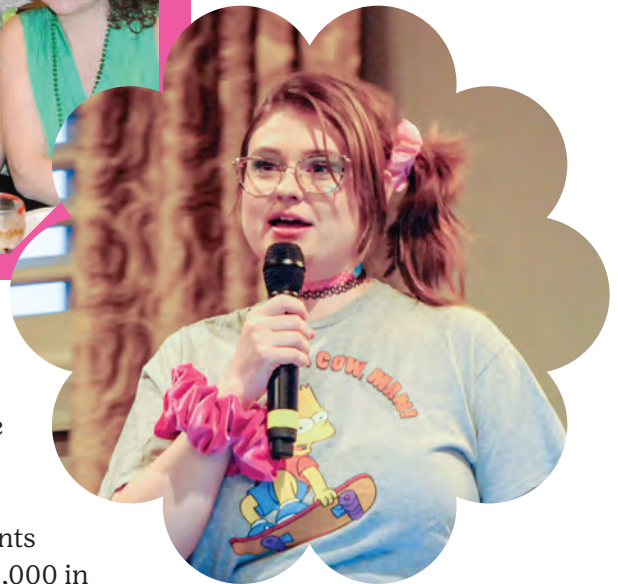
GSNI's website home page is designed to connect viewers directly to the information they are seeking. Volunteers can use the documents icon in the upper brow line to search for specific documents, such as Safety Activity Checkpoints or forms needed for events. Customers can click on the shop button and go directly to the GSNI shop page. At the bottom of the home page is a listing of upcoming programs, social media feed, and a carousel of upcoming council events to add to calendars.

The new GSNI website is a valuable tool for any visitor whether they are new to Girl Scouts or an established member!



Now complete, the new GSNI website is much more audience focused. Each section (or tab) and landing page has a specific audience in mind or pathways (links) to where visitors can self-select their audience to access more detailed information. The content in each section (or tab) is grouped for the following general audiences:

1. **Discover** – for current and prospective members seeking general information about Girl Scouts, GSNI, locations, board, staff, and equity and inclusion.
2. **Get Involved** – for those visitors who are ready to join Girl Scouts either as a member or volunteer, or ways to participate, or how to support GSNI.
3. **Cookies & Fall Product** – for customers looking to purchase Girl Scout Cookies or Fall Product and for members who are looking for product program resources.
4. **Activity Zone** – for members and volunteers looking for activities, events, forms, documents, stories, news, and information for a complete Girl Scout experience.
5. **Members** – for Girl Scouts, volunteers, and caregivers/families looking for resources to aid participation in Girl Scouts.



Philanthropy

GSNI's Philanthropy Team achieved sizable goals in 2022-23, bringing in just under \$630,000 through grants with an additional \$13,000 in sponsorships. The team completed five major fund-raising events which resulted in additional revenue of \$45,000. These funds increased accessibility for GSNI members regarding financial assistance, travel, and STEM.

GSNI's Totally Tubular Trivia Night in March 2023 was a huge success! Led by Girl Scout alum Rachel of Chicago Trivia Guys, participants competed to answer 80s and 90s pop culture trivia questions with prizes given to the top scoring and best-dressed tables. Everyone enjoyed Girl Scout Cookie-inspired cocktails, appetizers, and Bundtinis donated by Nothing Bundt Cakes of Deerfield. There was also a 50/50 drawing, silent auction, Kendra Scott pop-up shop, and selfie station for attendees.

In September 2023, GSNI's 19th Annual Thin Mint Sprint took participants through scenic streets and neighborhoods along the Fox River. Hosted in partnership with the Fox River Grove Memorial Library Running Club, the event brought in over 200 participants to walk or run the chip-timed race. The event began and ended at Fox River Grove's Lions Park and featured an exciting after-party. Participants purchased Kona Ice, explored a 52-foot inflatable obstacle course and visited community booths, including Mid-West Academy of Taekwondo, Mathnasium, Fisher Outreach Group, Advancing Global EDU, Yoga Six, Chicagoland Dog Rescue, Inspire Realty Group, and Big Brothers, Big Sisters of McHenry County. 🍀

Donors

GSNI is deeply grateful to those individuals, families, and companies for all financial donations made October 1, 2022–September 30, 2023.



10,000+

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 Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley
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We strive for accuracy in recognition of our donors and apologize for any errors. If a name does not appear on the list as it should, please contact GSNI's Philanthropy Department at 1-844-GSNI-4-ME (1-844-476-4463) or customercare@girlscoutsni.org.



The Juliette Gordon Low Society



The Juliette Gordon Low Society was established to thank and honor friends of Girl Scouting who choose to make Girl Scouts part of their legacies and a beneficiary of their estate plans.

Members of the Juliette Gordon Low Society are recognized locally and nationally by Girl Scouts of the USA. If you are interested in discussing planned gift opportunities and becoming a member of the Juliette Gordon Low Society, or if you have already named Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois in a planned gift but do not see your name, please contact GSNI's Philanthropy Department at 1-844-GSNI-4-ME (1-844-476-4463) or customercare@girlscoutsni.org.

- | | | |
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| De Ette Hammer <i>Estate</i> | | |

Finances

Statement of Financial Position FY23

Current Assets	5,949,892
Non-Current Assets	5,992,897
Total Assets	\$11,942,789
Current Liabilities	1,417,052
Net Assets	10,525,737
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$11,942,789

GSNI Income and Expenses FY23

Revenue		
Product Programs	3,869,700	56%
Public Support	717,248	10%
Program Fees	240,883	4%
Retail	214,708	3%
Other	1,838,441	27%
Total	\$6,880,980	100%
Expenses		
Program and Property	4,692,868	77%
Fundraising	170,503	3%
Administration	1,208,207	20%
Total	\$6,071,578	100%

1 1 3 1 9
FY23 Total Membership

7 5 8 3
Girl Membership

3 7 3 6
Adult Membership

1 1 7 2
Lifetime Membership

In Girl Scouts...

- 88% I feel like I belong.
- 87% I have a close friend.
- 94% I feel safe.
- 92% I can be myself.

“I believe our most important work is making every person feel welcome at GSNI.”

Dr. Kari Rockwell ♦ CEO, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois



girl scouts of northern illinois

GSNI Resource Centers

Freeport Resource Center

1834 S. West Ave., Suite 21, Freeport, IL 61032

Lake Zurich Resource Center

499 Ela Rd., Lake Zurich, IL 60047

Oswego Resource Center

3425 Orchard Rd., Oswego, IL 60543

Rockford Resource Center

1886 Daimler Rd., Rockford, IL 61112

South Elgin Resource Center

353 Randall Rd., South Elgin, IL 60177

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Kari Rockwell

A Land Acknowledgement

is an expression of gratitude and way of recognizing the lasting relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional homelands since time immemorial.

The Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois (GSNI) acknowledges that our Camps and Resource Centers are located on the ancestral lands of many Native Nations including the Fox & Sauk, Meskwaki, Peoria, Kickapoo, Ho-chunk and the Potawatomi.

GSNI is dedicated to the preservation of traditional lands. We seek to support Native American heritage by paying our respects to Indigenous peoples and are committed to honor their connection and care for the Land.

GSNI Camps

Camp Dean

46W253 Camp Dean Rd., Big Rock, IL 60511

Camp McCormick

9995 N. Girl Scout Rd., Stillman Valley, IL 61084

Mary Ann Beebe Center

17501 Streit Rd., Harvard, IL 60033

www.girlscoutsni.org
1-844-476-4463

