



Girl Scout Network: Women's History Month and the Girl Scouts' 108th Birthday are the Perfect Time to Celebrate Girl Scouts and Girl Scout Alums

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Glen Carbon, Illinois – The extraordinary history of Girl Scouts began 108 years ago with the original G.I.R.L., Juliette Gordon “Daisy” Low. On March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Georgia, she organized the very first Girl Scout troop, and every year since, we’ve honored her vision and legacy, building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. During Women’s History Month and Girl Scout Week (Girl Scouts turns 108 this week) it is powerful to reflect on how Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSofSI) alums have influenced the movement and the nation. Girl Scouts provides a lifelong adventure, full of friendship, connection, service, and fun! It is important to share the stories of Girl Scout Alums who are out busy paving the way for tomorrow’s history makers. In the words of Juliette Gordon Low, “The work of today is the history of tomorrow and we are its makers.”

Some highlights that speak to the courageous character of Girl Scout members include the fact that there are currently more than 50 million Girl Scout alums. Did you know that seventy-three percent of current female senators are Girl Scout alums? Every female secretary of state in U.S. history is a former Girl Scout and more than half (52 percent) of female business leaders are Girl Scout alums.

The Girl Scout Promise and Law promote service to others and to country. Among millions of Girl Scout alums, and thousands of alums right here in Southern Illinois who have incredible stories of service, one recently graduated Girl Scout from Southern Illinois is already shaping the future for women everywhere through her service to country. Her story exemplifies how Girl Scouts has positively affected her own life and

how Girl Scouts gives her a platform to inspire other young girls and their caregivers to partake in the same awesome Girl Scout experiences—to inspire them to action and to show them all the amazing things they can be and do.

US National Guard Private First Class Kinsey Stockmann

Metro East inspiration, Kinsey Stockmann, whose mother Michelle Stockmann is one of the founders of Women Empowering Women (wewnational.com), was a Girl Scout from kindergarten through 8th grade. Kinsey sold cookies and went to camp, but her experience with Girl Scouts led her to so much more. Today Kinsey serves in the Army National Guard as a PFC (Private First Class). She looks forward to receiving the rank of Sergeant soon and to the possibility of becoming a recruiter. Kinsey is nearly two years into her six year contract. She truly believes Girl Scouts helped her grow as an individual. She believes Girl Scouts gave her the leadership skills she used later in the military in AIT (Advanced Individual Training) where she had the opportunity to become Platoon Guide for four out of the six weeks of AIT training. Her Girl Scout Leadership Experience also helped her shine in her platoon, so much so that her Drill Sergeants nominated her for the Distinguished Honor Graduate recognition—an award she received at graduation.

Girl Scouts care deeply about service to country and about the soldiers who uphold and defend our nation every day both within our borders and overseas. In fact, this year Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSofSI) is poised to donate more than 20,000 boxes of cookies to Gifts of Caring and US Veterans. GSofSI's Gift of Caring program, called Operation: Sweet Treats, allowed customers to purchase and donate cookies that will be sent to military members stationed in Southern Illinois as well as overseas.

Girl Scouts are passionate about the world around them. Girl Scouts is a sisterhood. The stories of these girls are meant to inspire. Still, GSofSI wants to hear your Girl Scout history; your courageous story. Come and share it with them via the newly launched Girl Scout Network of Southern Illinois, which is part of GSUSA's nationally connected network of in-person groups engaged with alums and other supporters. The Girl Scout Network of Southern Illinois is inclusive to those who have been part of the Girl Scout mission, including former volunteers, board members, Lifetime Members, and Girl Scout alums. The Girl Scout Network is for adults (18+) who might be engaged with Girl Scouts in different capacities.

In 2020, GSofSI will continue to host our casual networking series honoring regional women of distinction who embody the Girl Scout mission. Mark your calendars - you are invited to reconnect with the Girl Scout mission and leadership experience. Thursday, April 2 - The Weingarten in Belleville, IL; Thursday, May 21 - Tuscan Hills Winery in Effingham, IL; Thursday, June 18 - Pheasant Hollow Winery in Whittington,

IL; Thursday, July 9 - Walker's Bluff in Carterville, IL. For more information about the Girl Scout Network of Southern Illinois, please contact mochsner@gsfsi.org or visit <https://www.gsfsi.org/en/give/GirlScoutNetworkofSouthernIllinois.html> .

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSofSI) is a high-capacity Girl Scout council serving approximately 9,338 girls and engaging 3,587 adult volunteers while providing financial assistance to 2,722 members in 40 and ½ counties in Southern Illinois. GSofSI Mission: *Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.* The Girl Scouts organization is the world's largest leadership development organization for girls. In partnership with committed adults, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives – such as strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth. Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts; they also explore math and science and learn about diversity, good citizenship, leadership and teamwork. Girl Scouting is the place where girls experience the fun, friendship and power of girls together. Join Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois today! Adult Volunteers and Girls K-12 welcome. Call 800-345-6858 or email customercare@gsfsi.org. GSofSI is a not-for-profit organization supported by various United Ways throughout the region. Girl Scouts is a Proud Partner of United Way.