



# Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois Receives \$72,000 AT&T STEM Grant

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**Glen Carbon, Illinois** – Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) has received a \$72,000 grant from Girl Scouts of the USA and AT&T to advance Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) for 200 girls in 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades in the Collinsville School District. The grant is part of a partnership between GSUSA and AT&T through a program called *Imagine Your STEM Future*.



Imagine girls in careers that foster creativity, action, a good income, and opportunities to change the world for the better. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) skills can get girls there! As a long-time supporter of Girl Scouts, AT&T's Imagine Your STEM Future is a four-part series designed to increase girls' interest in STEM careers and inspire them to become leaders through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

“We are thrilled to receive this Imagine Your STEM Future grant from GSUSA and AT&T,” said Micah Bolandis, Director of Mission Delivery. “Today’s girls need programming that will introduce them to a variety of career options in the science, technology, engineering and math fields. GSSI has an extensive STEM program that allows girls to participate in a variety of STEM initiatives like programming robots, building bridges, candy chemistry and STEM Explosion Day Camp. In fact, more than 1,728 girls participated in a STEM program in the past year,” Bolandis added.

Through the Imagine Your STEM Future grant, Girl Scouts and AT&T have united to advance underserved high school girls in science and engineering. As minority students and women are gravitating away from science and engineering toward other professions, and employment in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields are increasing at a faster pace than in non-STEM fields, educational experts say the U.S. must increase proficiency and interest in these areas to compete in the global economy. Today, Girl Scouts of the USA and AT&T are addressing this issue with a \$1 million AT&T Aspire contribution to spark interest in STEM in underserved high school girls across the country.

Experts say the country's need for a world-leading STEM workforce will continue to grow. Recent research from the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce predicts 2.8 million STEM job openings as of 2018, including 1.2 million net new jobs and an additional 1.6 million replacement openings.

“Girl Scouts has a long history of encouraging girls to participate in STEM. The first STEM badges – the electrician badge and the flyer badge – were introduced in 1913. GSSI’s goal is to build and reinforce girls’ interest in STEM, to support their continued involvement as they reach critical decision-making points and to achieve parity in these fields,” Bolandis said.

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