

Lauren Carter, Girl Scout from Collinsville, meets with AT&T representatives at Girl Scout National Convention

October 27 2014 10:01 AM

AT&T and Girl Scouts Team Up to Inspire Girls to Pursue STEM Careers in southern Illinois



Glen Carbon, Illinois – Lauren Carter, a Girl Scout from Collinsville, travelled to the Girl Scouts of the USA's National Convention in Salt Lake City recently to participate

in the Girl Scout Leadership Institute. While at the convention, Lauren and three other Girl Scouts from Nevada, California and West Virginia met with senior AT&T representatives to talk about girls today and Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM)

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) was one of four councils nationwide that received a \$72,000 grant from Girl Scouts of the USA and AT&T to advance Science, Technology, Engineering & Math for 200 girls in 10th-12th grades in the Collinsville and East St. Louis School District. The grant is part of a partnership between GSUSA and AT&T through a program called *Imagine Your STEM Future*.

Lauren and other Girl Scouts had breakfast with Cathy Coughlin, GSUSA Board Member, AT&T Executive Vice President and Chief Global Marketing Officer and Marachel Knight, AT&T Vice President of Technology Reliability Centers. Lauren shared about her Girl Scouting journey and STEM experiences and how both have positively impacted her. “I love the Girl Scouts and I love Science, Technology, Engineering & Math,” Lauren said. “Thank you AT&T for supporting the Girl Scouts and providing more girls STEM opportunities.”

As the result of a \$625,000 national contribution from A&T Aspire—a long-time supporter of Girl Scouting—Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is implementing “Imagine Your STEM Future.” Through this program, GSSI will inspire even more girls to pursue STEM fields. “Imagine Your STEM Future” will be implemented as a natural addition to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), where girls will gain leadership skills by engaging with program materials in the context of the three Girl Scout processes: girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning.

“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.

The contribution from AT&T is part of AT&T Aspire, the company’s signature education initiative, focusing on school success and workforce readiness. Beyond funding, AT&T employees are giving their time by providing mentoring, which is a part of the company's commitment for one million hours of mentoring by 2016.

More specifically, “Imagine Your STEM Future” will provide after school STEM and mentoring activities to 800 girls in four councils across the country, 75% of which are at-

risk of dropping out of high school. This program will also increase local involvement of community and professional volunteers, and the program's outcome will be measured by girls' academic performance.

Girl Scouts leads the nation in empowering girls to pursue their natural interests in STEM. Girls exposed to STEM activities and careers while being encouraged by professional mentors will not only be more likely to graduate high school on time, but also be more likely to excel in STEM-related subjects in school, explore post-secondary education in STEM, and consider STEM-related careers in which women are historically underrepresented.

The Girl Scout Mission is: ***Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place.*** Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts, but 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 working together.

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois serves 14,000 girls and 4,800 adult volunteers in more than 40 counties in southern Illinois. Girl Scouting has inspired more than 50 million girls and women since its founding in 1912. Girl Scouts is focused on providing a premier Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls in the 21st century, while ensuring the traditions and values that have been core to Girl Scouting since its beginning remain strong and relevant. Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a not-for-profit organization supported by various United Ways throughout the region. Girl Scouts is a Proud Partner of United Way.

About AT&T Philanthropy:

AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. In 2013, more than \$130 million was contributed or directed through corporate-, employee-, social investment- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T's signature education initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring.

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