

Girl Scouts

Empowering today's G.I.R.L. with Girl Scouts Heart of the South

GO GETTER. INNOVATOR. RISK-TAKER. LEADER.

Girl Scout Cookies teach skills and compassion

Girl Scout cookies are a special treat many people look forward to every year. For Girl Scouts, it's a time to build financial literacy skills, practice job skills, earn funds for activities and trips, and give a bit of happiness to others.

One marketing strategy girls have when a customer tells them they don't eat cookies is to ask, "Would you like to donate a box instead?" Girls can then talk to customers about their Gift of Caring project - providing cookies to a local agency - or giving cookies to military service members through Troop 2 Troop.

Generous customers gave \$81,600 in support of Gift of Caring and Troop 2 Troop efforts, while supporting local Girl Scout troops. Nearly 6,500 boxes of cookies were given to nursing homes, children's hospitals, disaster relief centers, and police and fire stations that were chosen by the girls. Over 13,900 boxes were delivered to military bases and National Guard centers throughout the region as part of Troop 2 Troop.

Susan Yount, Girl Scout Alumna and Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Financial Federal, said co-workers were so touched by the idea of donating cookies to military service members they didn't hesitate to respond. All the employees personally

contributed and the company made a contribution. "It's a win-win for our company, the Girl Scouts and our military," Susan said. "It was a positive experience and we are proud to be a part of it."

Additionally, companies were given an opportunity to support "The Happy Project," a council initiative to bring a little bit of happiness to local veterans services agencies or active military service members. Through The Happy Project, 113 boxes of cookies brought smiles to active service members and veterans.

Proceeds from Girl Scout Cookies purchased locally stay in this region to support Girl Scout troops and this council.

There are still cookies in the cupboard. If you would like to discuss how you or your company can spread a little happiness to veterans, your employees, or clients, please contact Girl Scouts Heart of the South at 800-624-4185.



The veterans at Alpha Omega Veterans Services were excited to receive the Girl Scout cookies delivered and purchased by Memphis Urban League as part of The Happy Project. Memphis Urban League and other Happy Project supporters, Huey's and Debra West, Chancellor of Arkansas State University - Mid-South, showed support for the men and women who protect our freedom, and doubled their impact in the local community by also supporting service-learning and leadership programs for Girl Scouts.



▲ Girl Scout Brownie Brennan, shows the appreciation cards Girl Scout Troop 10785 drew and placed on the cases of cookies donated by Financial Federal as part of the Troop 2 Troop sales pitch.



Members of the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade in Starkville, MS helped unload cases of Girl Scout cookies donated through Troop 2 Troop.

Double the impact

Chelsie East said she will never forget her daughter's first Girl Scout Brownie meeting. "When I asked her how she liked Girl Scouts, her reply was, 'Momma, I finally found my tribe.'" That's when Chelsie knew Girl Scouts was an organization she would support.

As most moms do, Chelsie began helping out with her daughter's troop. She became more involved throughout the year and decided she wanted to open up Girl Scout opportunities to more girls. So, Chelsie has become a Troop Co-Leader. But she wanted to do more.

"I believe in the Girl Scout program and what it stands for," Chelsie said. "Girl Scouts molds girls into being the leaders of tomorrow, and most importantly, it gives girls a place where they belong."

Chelsie learned her employer, GE Capital Aviation Services, supports organizations where their employees volunteer and support financially. Through GE's matching gift and volunteer grant programs, Chelsie has increased her impact for Girl Scouts Heart of the South and her troop.



Chelsie East has increased her volunteer and financial contributions to Girl Scouts through her employer's volunteer and gift matching programs.

"At GECAS Materials, we are proud to support our employees who give of their own time by volunteering," said Cyndi Long, Site Operations Manager. "Our corporate donations help employees support the communities in which we work and live, while improving employee morale. GECAS Materials applauds our employees who are making a difference through volunteerism."

Other companies that have supported Girl Scouts Heart of the South through volunteer grants and matching gifts programs are First Tennessee, Kohl's, and AT&T. Check with your human resource department to see if your volunteer hours or financial contributions can be matched to double your impact.

Click to view Girl Scouts Heart of the South's 2017-18 Annual Report



girl scouts
heart of the south

Annual Report
2017-18

P.O. Box 240246, Memphis, TN 38124
800.624.4185 • www.girlscoutshs.org

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.

Connect with GSHS

How can you connect with Girl Scouts Heart of the South? Volunteer for an event or a series of events. Financially sponsor a girl, program or special event. Encourage employees to get involved. Contact Venus Chaney, Chief Development and Advocacy Officer, to discuss opportunities: 901.334.3465; venus.chaney@girlscoutshs.org.



The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest, most prestigious award a girl can earn. Through the seven-step process to earn the Gold Award, girls tackle issues that are important to them and create sustainable solutions that impact their community. The 21-member Girl Scouts Heart of the South 2019 Gold Award Girl Scout class established mentorship programs, encouraged community service and activism, educated others about the environment, spoke out about bullying, supported children with special needs, and took action to improve the lives of others.

A Gold Award Girl Scout uses her leadership and creativity to not only empower and better herself, but to also make the world a better place for others.



Camp is more than s'mores

Summertime and camp have been synonymous for generations. Girl Scouts have ridden in trains, buses and cars for the opportunity to spend a week or two at camp. The songs, friends and experiences live on long past summer and often linger for a lifetime.

Many past campers, companies and foundations who understand the value of a camp experience, ensure girls have access to camp each summer. Camperships - scholarships to attend

summer camp - are available to girls who otherwise would not be able to attend. Generous donors contribute an average of \$8,000 each year, but the campership requests always exceed funds received.



For those girls who do receive assistance, it's an experience they are grateful to have. Chole said, "Thank you for my camp scholarship. Between crafts, canoeing, singing songs, and learning new things, camp makes my summer great!"

Girl Scouts Heart of the South operates over 40 summer camp sessions in June and July at Kamp Kiwani in Middleton, TN and Camp Tik-A-Witha in Van Vleet, MS. Over 300 girls, ages 6-18, ride

A dad's promise

Jim Wilson has made a promise to his son, Phillip, and other children with special needs, to be their voice and advocate. Here is Jim and Phillip's story:

"In 2014, Phillip was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder called ADNP Syndrome. As the parent of a child with special needs, it is often difficult to find places and caregivers tailored to truly serve the needs, in a caring, loving, and compassionate environment, of a special needs child. Camp

Tik-A-Witha provides that kind of place and that kind of service, and we are thankful to have been a part of it for so many years.

I have always believed that there are plenty of parents out there with special needs children who love their children just as much as I love Phillip, but that may not have the resources or skill set to advocate on their behalf.

With that recognition, I made a promise to Phillip and all those parents that I would use my gifts to advocate not only for Phillip, but for

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horses, swim, learn about science and the environment, paddle down a river, work as a team to overcome obstacles, zip through treetops, cook over a fire, and have LOTS of fun. [Click to learn more about Girl Scouts Heart of the South's summer camp program.](#) Spots are still open for your girl.

Additionally, the Elizabeth Gwin ("EG") Session for Children with Special Needs at Camp Tik-A-Witha was started in 1973 for summer campers with disabilities. Girls and boys, ages 6-21, come from across the region to camp, make new

friends, swim, hike, ride horses, canoe, cook out and just have fun. A volunteer staff provide one-on-one assistance to the campers. General campers interact with special needs campers throughout the week. Parents and families are able to take a small respite from what can be a very stressful life, knowing their child is well cared for and having fun.

Phillip has attended this week-long camp for many years, and his parents think it is an awesome experience for him. So awesome that his dad, Jim Wilson, decided to support the camp through a Facebook fundraising campaign. See "A dad's promise" on the left for Jim and Phillip's story.

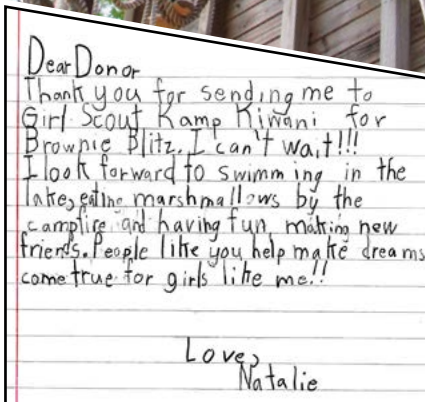
The funds raised by Jim's campaign will be used to endow a camp scholarship in Phillip's name to provide financial assistance for other campers to attend the EG Session in the future. Additionally, renovations and improvements at Camp Tik-A-Witha will make facilities more accessible for campers of all ability levels.

Contact us to learn how you can support our outdoor programs.



Because of Girl Scouts, 71% of girls tried an outdoor activity for the first time; 72% improved an outdoor skill, and 29% overcame a fear of an outdoor activity.

- GSRI, "More than S'mores"



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A dad's promise

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all special needs children, any time that I could. Hopefully those efforts, along with the efforts of many other parents, teachers, and friends, have served these children well. Awareness is critically important.

I don't recall how we learned about the EG Session, but once we discovered its existence, we made the decision to sign Phillip up and give it a try. That was many years ago. I remember those first couple of years feeling very concerned about leaving Phillip with people that we didn't know for an entire week, in the hot summer, in rural Mississippi. The first couple of years we checked in regularly on how Phillip was doing. It became apparent to us, very quickly, that the EG Session, and Camp Tik-A-Witha, was a special place. The volunteers who work the camp are totally engaged with the children. I trust them completely. While he cannot tell me how his camp experience is each summer, I truly know that Phillip enjoys his week at Camp Tik-A-Witha.

Having a resource nearby to provide your special needs child with a loving and caring environment, and to get to spend a week of summer camp each year, is very meaningful to Phillip, his mom, and I. Camp not only allows Phillip to engage in activities that he would otherwise not do, it allows us and his brother to have a respite from the daily requirements of taking care of a person with serious special needs. Raising a child with special needs is a real challenge, one that generally cannot be fully appreciated by others who have not raised a special needs child.

Over the years in dropping Phillip off and picking him up from camp, I couldn't help but notice that the facilities at Camp Tik-A-Witha were in need of drastic improvements. I decided to do a Facebook fund raiser last year in Phillip's honor, with proceeds going to the ADNP Research Foundation. The results from that campaign were so positive, that I decided to do another Facebook fund raiser this year in honor of Phillip's 16th birthday, but to direct the proceeds to the EG Session for much needed improvements for Camp Tik-A-Witha. The fund raiser ran for several weeks, and once again, the support was overwhelming and humbling. We raised over \$11,000 through the generosity of family, friends, and strangers alike. We are so grateful for all of the kind donations that were made and are excited about the improvements that will eventually be made at the camp through these donations.

I cannot say enough about how much I admire and respect all the volunteers who give a week of their time each summer to help assure that children, like Phillip, get to enjoy a week of summer camp. Those volunteers are the real heroes to me, and are such a blessing to Phillip, other children with special needs, and their families.

The very least I can do for Phillip, who has no voice, is to be his voice and to fight fiercely for what I believe is in his best interest. While doing so, I am committed to advocating and fighting for others with special needs. We are forever thankful for Ms. Gwin's vision on having a camp dedicated for those with special needs and are happy to help ensure that her dream survives and thrives for many years to come. We are thankful to Girl Scouts Heart of the South for its support of the EG Session, and all that it does for children with special needs. We are looking forward to July, when Phillip gets to spend another fun filled week at Camp Tik-A-Witha."


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