

GSWISE Members,

At Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE), the average cost to deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is \$360 per girl. GSWISE camp fees, event fees, and product program sales cover \$290 of the costs, but a \$70 per girl gap remains. GSWISE subsidizes this revenue gap through philanthropic efforts, investment income, and reserve funds.

We are fortunate to be a financially healthy organization that has reserve funds available to partially support operations, but ongoing usage of reserve funds is not a long-term solution. Much like a person's emergency savings, those dollars are best set aside for unfortunate surprises, rather than for day-to-day expenditures. We recognize that the jump from \$25 to \$50 for a girl's registration fee is significant. The decision to add a \$25 council service fee was based upon the need to close the revenue gap and remain strong.

Implementing this council service fee was a decision that was not taken lightly. Since 2011, more than one third of Girl Scout councils have implemented a council service fee. Our Board considered it then and has continually evaluated it as an option. To minimize costs passed along to members, GSWISE has been heavily focused on growing philanthropic revenue and reducing the usage of reserve funds. But the gains we have made in recent years have been offset by a decline in giving from institutional funders as their own donations decrease, or as they focus their charitable support on other community needs. We also know that sales from our Girl Scout Cookie Program are reaching a plateau in our market. Due to slow growth in revenue, uncertainty of the investment market, and the rising costs of goods and services for programming, it is time for us to take action and ensure that we are positioned for continued long-term success.

The council service fee is one way in which we will stabilize revenue. Additionally, GSWISE has made operational changes to reduce costs without significantly impacting girls' experiences. As examples: (1) we coordinated with community partners who use their skills and knowledge to offer robust programming to girls and reduced council-created programs that are more costly to administer; (2) we realigned our staffing to utilize cross-functional talents with program and camp staff teams; (3) we reduced Resource Center operating hours to more efficiently meet guests' needs; and (4) we routinely assess open staff positions from employee attrition to determine if we can operate in a more cost-effective way.

We hope you and your family have experienced the value of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and will continue to be a part of our unique organization that builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Thank you for your support of Girl Scouting!
-Michelle Goetsch, GSWISE CFO