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a community publication

Local Girl Scouts take leadership national

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southeast

Local Girl Scouts Bring their Voices to the Global Stage

Each year, Girl Scouts from across the country attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). In March 2025, four Girl Scouts from southeast Wisconsin will travel to the UN headquarters in New York City to serve as delegates at the 69th annual CSW. They will join more than 5,000 girls and women from around the world to bring the voice of girls and young women to the global conversation.

The CSW is dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women. In 2025, the commission will focus on reviewing the appraisal and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action—a UN resolution adopted in 1995 that was considered the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing women's rights.

Learn more about the four local Girl Scouts selected as delegates to represent Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE) after a national application process.

Sophia B.

Age: 16

Girl Scout Ambassador

Hometown: Brookfield

A Girl Scout since the first grade, Sophia says she has always been interested in promoting gender equality.

“When I saw an opportunity to aid these change efforts on a global scale through an organization I’d been a part of for so long, I was excited to apply for the delegate role,” she says.

Through attending different sessions at the commission, Sophia is eager to make her mark on issues that matter most to girls and women.

“I’m most looking forward to being able to make a real difference in issues regarding gender equality and sustainability on a global scale,” Sophia says. “I’ll be able to make real changes to issues that I’ve cared about my entire life. This is especially exciting for me because I never expected to be given such an amazing opportunity before I’d graduated college, much less at only 16.”

Sophia is working on her Girl Scout Gold Award with a project to increase menstrual product accessibility for low-income families and people with special needs. She also serves as a girl member on GSWISE’s Board of Directors.

After high school, Sophia plans to double major in political science and business. She is considering a career in law or politics.



Kailey P.

Age: 17

Girl Scout Ambassador

Hometown: Muskego

Kailey had always been aware of gender inequality. But, when her own sister was singled out in a school activity on the basis of her gender, it brought the issue close to home.

During a robotics team meeting, her sister was pulled out of her usual role as a programmer and instructed to take notes “because she was the only one with pretty enough handwriting.”

“She was also the only girl in the room,” Kailey recalls.

The incident sparked Kailey to take action.

“If girls cannot utilize the same opportunities as boys in my own school, how are we equal?” she says. “I wanted to make change, not just for me and my sister, but for every girl in my community.”

As a CSW delegate, Kailey has enjoyed getting to know other like-minded girls from around the globe during biweekly virtual prep meetings. Kailey aspires to one day work in the Peace Corps or a similar organization to provide healthcare to women around the world.

Although she won’t leave for the CSW in New York until the spring, the delegate experience has already made impacted her worldview.

“The education, experience, and thoughtful conversations I am receiving have helped me to think critically and deeply about the world around me and my place in it,” Kailey says.



Donors like you empower Girl Scouts like Sophia, Kailey, Hannah, and Gemma to advocate for others and make the world a better place.

Hannah L.

Age: 16

Girl Scout Ambassador

Hometown: Milwaukee

As a Girl Scout for nearly 12 years, Hannah's leadership resume already includes serving as a GSWISE girl board member and on GSWISE's Girl Scout Leadership Network in an advisory role to the CEO. Hannah was inspired to take her leadership skills to the next level by serving as a CSW delegate.



"Girl Scouts taught me to make the world a better place and really grew my love for social justice and change," she says. "I was inspired by other Girl Scouts before me who were doing these amazing things for the world. I wanted to not only follow in their footsteps but create change of my own that will benefit other girls in the future."

Hannah recently attended a summer session at Tulane University focused on gender studies and climate change. She also participated in a mission trip to Appalachia to help restore houses destroyed by hurricanes. Coming from three generations of young mothers, issues related to girls and women are especially important to Hannah.

"I feel so grateful I get to be a part of the CSW experience since I am really interested in international policy and global change," Hannah says. "This opportunity will only fuel my passion for social justice and motivate me to follow my dreams of making the world a better place."

Gemma V.

Age: 15

Girl Scout Senior

Hometown: Milwaukee

After more than a decade as a Girl Scout, Gemma has already stepped up as a leader and a representative of GSWISE. She serves on the council's Girl Scout Leadership Network and volunteers with her younger sister's troop. She has also been tapped by the council for numerous speaking opportunities, including at an annual fundraising gala and interviews with local TV and radio stations.



After completing a school research project focused on the gender wage gap, Gemma was inspired to apply for the role of CSW delegate.

"I thought it would be an amazing way to be able to contribute to the pioneering for equality, even as a teenager," Gemma says.

After high school, Gemma's goal is to attend medical school at the University of Chicago and become a surgeon. Her time as a Girl Scout and CSW delegate is already helping her work toward her dreams, she says.

"I think this experience will give me a lesson on advocating for myself and my peers, which is important if I want to go into a career in a male-dominated field," Gemma says.



COMMISSION on the
STATUS OF WOMEN



Building Confidence to Lead Through Girl Scouting

Courage, confidence, and character aren't just part of the Girl Scouts mission for Girl Scout alum Nia Holloway—those values are at the core of who she is today.

Before she walked across her high school graduation stage last spring, Nia had already stepped up as a leader in the Milwaukee community. As one of the few Black students at her high school, she was inspired to create a Black Student Union to offer a safe space for other Black students and to connect with the school community. As president, Nia worked closely with faculty and staff to launch and manage the union.

Nia credits the foundation of her leadership skills to her time as a Girl Scout.

“Drawing all the way back to being in a troop, we always were taught to lead and how to set examples,” she says. Nia fondly remembers the camaraderie of being part of an active troop as a Daisy and Brownie and attending camp at Camp Alice Chester.

As a teen, Nia went back to Alice Chester to serve as a camp counselor and nurture the next generation of Girl Scouts.

“I love working with the younger kids; it gives me nostalgia being back there,” Nia says. “I can pass on the fun that I had to the younger kids.”

Nia also had opportunities to speak in front of crowds as a Girl Scout, which helped sharpen her public speaking skills. Those skills have served her well. During her senior year, Nia was part of a small group of students selected to speak at an influential school board meeting.

“It felt good to have impact, to be chosen to speak, and to change the way that school would be once I leave the school,” she says.

In her last year of high school, Nia was recognized as Senior of the Year and chosen to speak at her school's University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Senior Signing Day. Nia's speech highlighted the importance of using time wisely. She also spoke about her experience as a high school student during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The Girl Scouting experiences are all worth it,” she says. “It's lot of fun in being a Girl Scout, with activities we do, the trips we go on; but it's also the connections you get and learning skills that you take on in life.”

Nia is currently studying biology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



By supporting Girl Scouts, you support girls like Nia who are making a difference in their communities and serving as the next generation of leaders.

Troop 4801 Shares 13 Years of Growth and Memories



Heather Connett formed Troop 4801 in 2011, bringing together a group of kindergartners as Daisies. Thirteen years later, five of those Girl Scouts remained together in their Girl Scout troop. Since their very first Daisy meeting, Troop 4801 shared more than a decade of experiences and growth.

Today, each Girl Scout has their own unique personality, but Girl Scouts is the thread that unites them, Heather says. Over the years, they've created countless memories through their troop activities.

"My philosophy as a troop leader is to get girls exposure or experiences they might not normally get in the course of growing up," Heather says.

That has included many camping trips, both at day camp and with overnight excursions to Girl Scout properties including Camp Silver Brook. Heather also led the girls on trips further afield, including a ziplining excursion in Door County and a five-night trip to Savannah, Georgia, the birthplace of Girl Scouts founder Juliette Gordon Low. The Girl Scouts even went on college visits together.

"They're all widely different, but they support each other as Girl Scouts," Heather says.

Between badge workshops, cooking classes, travel opportunities, and campouts, troop leader Heather has had a front-row seat as each girl developed her self-confidence and unique leadership style through Girl Scouting.

Today, one of the alums of Troop 4801 is part of a 13-person national Sandy Hook Board. Two Girl Scouts earned their

Girl Scout Gold Awards, the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, and other troop members earned their Girl Scout Silver and Bronze Awards. Four of the five troop members are now attending college, and one is taking a gap year.

"All are focused and have goals for themselves," Heather says. "It's been a joy to watch."

The benefits of Girl Scouting extend far beyond Troop 4801 and southeast Wisconsin. A national study from the Girl Scout Research Institute found that Girl Scout alumnae are more likely than other women to exhibit leadership attributes, attain higher levels of education, and contribute to causes they support.

As a troop leader, Heather has been a constant in the girls' lives. Since 2011, she has seen each one go from a Daisy or Brownie to graduating high school. The role has been rewarding, she says.

"I was a Girl Scout through high school myself, so I wanted to make sure my daughter had those experiences as well. I wanted to share that with her," she says. "Being a troop leader is what you make of it. It's a lot of work, but it's also heartwarming."

Dedicated troop leaders like Heather help Girl Scouts be their best selves. By supporting Girl Scouts, you support girls and the volunteers who mentor and nurture today and tomorrow's leaders.

Why We Give: MilliporeSigma

When Elizabeth Clemins and Chelsea Krogman started their careers at life science company MilliporeSigma, there were few other women working alongside them. Today, as MilliporeSigma deepens its partnership with Girl Scouts to provide hands-on STEM experiences, local employees like Elizabeth and Chelsea are helping support the next generation of women in their field.

“When I first started at MilliporeSigma, I was the only female on the shift,” Chelsea recalls. “One of the things I love is to see the Girl Scouts get excited about STEM and to motivate them to continue on in that field so one day they can look around and see other females standing next to them.”

Elizabeth and Chelsea are co-leads of MilliporeSigma’s SPARK Program and Curiosity Labs in Milwaukee. The company’s science education outreach program brings engaging STEM activities to Girl Scouts to foster girls’ passion for science.

Volunteer scientists from MilliporeSigma visit Girl Scout troops and volunteer at council events to run hands-on Curiosity Labs programs. The lab activities align with a troop’s unique interests, their progress toward badges, or their work toward highest awards.

During workshops, Girl Scouts have built their own water filtration systems, learned how to be fragrance chemists, and investigated the chemical reaction that causes a glow stick to glow.

MilliporeSigma recently announced an additional \$25,000 grant to expand its support of STEM programming for GSWISE, including more opportunities for the company’s Milwaukee-area employees to volunteer with Girl Scouts.

“I started in our production labs 24 years ago and it was very male-dominated, but one of those things that always stuck with me was all those women that came before me,” Liz says. “We’re always trying to find a way to help advance our young girls and make sure they know that those opportunities are out there.”

Support from community partners like MilliporeSigma helps cultivate an early passion for STEM leadership. As Girl Scouts learn through real-life science experiments and interact with professionals in the field, they build the confidence and skills to become the next STEM innovators. Thank you to all at MilliporeSigma for your support of Girl Scouts.



Dates to Remember



December 22-
January 5

All GSWISE
Offices Closed



January 22

Girl Scout Cookie
Season Starts



March 9-15

Girl Scout Week

Here's a Peek at What GSWISE Has Been Up To



Girl Scouts enjoy a special drive-in showing of Moana as part of an early renewal incentive.



Rockwell Automation volunteers spend time working on property improvements at Chinook Program Center during the United Way Season of Caring.



Girl Scouts share how to explore locally and nationally with troop leaders at Idea Fest.



Local Girl Scout troops participate in back-to-school open houses.



Girl Scout troops kick off the annual Fall Product Program.

What was the best thing you did as a Girl Scout this year?

“Attending NCS as a national delegate. It was so special to see so many Girl Scouts in one place and so many strong, impactful adult women who still support the Movement.”

- GSWISE Girl Scout

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Dear Girl Scout Friends,

As I celebrate my one-year anniversary as CEO of Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast, I want to take a moment to reflect on the journey so far and, most importantly, express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering support. Your generosity and belief in our mission have been a cornerstone in helping us provide unique leadership development opportunities and safe spaces for growth for Girl Scouts of all ages in southeastern Wisconsin.

From day one, my priority has been to strengthen the already strong foundation that this organization is built upon. Girl Scouts has a legacy of empowering young women, and my vision for the future is clear: to continue nurturing the next generation of female leaders who will build a brighter, more equitable world. Through leadership development, skill-building, and one-of-a-kind activities and partnerships, we are equipping local Girl Scouts with tools and resources to become tomorrow's top talent—ready to lead with courage, confidence, and character.

This past year has underscored the impact we have when we invest in girls. I've witnessed firsthand the transformations in young women like Girl Scout alum Nia (page 4) and Troop 4801 (page 5), who have stepped into their full potential, ready to lead their communities and break barriers.

Looking ahead, I am more committed than ever to showcasing the profound difference we are making together. Whether it's through our STEM initiatives supported by partners like MilliporeSigma (page 6) or through hands-on leadership experiences like the Commission on the Status of Women (pages 2-3), we are ensuring that every Girl Scout who walks through our doors is prepared to face the future—and shape it.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey. With your support, I know we will continue to grow and evolve, fostering the leadership of tomorrow, today.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ana Simpson".

Ana Simpson
GSWISE Chief Executive Officer



Ana Simpson, CEO