

Kara Hemphill

Organization Narrative

The mission of Girl Scouts is to build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) has been serving girls in Cleveland and surrounding areas since 1918, and now serves over 35,000 girls ages 5-17 in an 18-county region with the help of 14,000 adult members and volunteers.

Girl Scouts is the country's preeminent leadership organization for girls, and everything we do is designed to develop tomorrow's leaders. A leader discovers, connects, and takes action to better her community and the world. In order to become leaders, girls need to: understand themselves and their values, and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world (Discover); care about, inspire and team with others locally and globally (Connect); and act to make the world a better place (Take Action). In order to develop the strongest leaders in our community, the Girl Scout Leadership Experience focuses on six areas: STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), the Arts, Healthy Living, Environmental Awareness, Community Engagement and Financial Literacy.

Girl Scouts also discover, connect and take action through Girl Scout Journeys, the core of the redefined national program experience. New age level books outline activities that are focused on a specific theme: advocacy, the environment or creative expression. These activities are designed to specifically engage girls in the keys to leadership as they complete their Journeys and earn awards and proficiency badges. Completing Leadership Journeys allows girls of all ages to become more confident leaders as they strive to develop and live by their values, build healthy relationships, and make the world a better place.

In addition, Girl Scouts participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program – the largest girl-led business in the world – to gain valuable business and leadership skills. Through cookie sales and other financial literacy efforts, girls learn to write a business plan, market products, and use their funds to make the world around them a better place.

Program Narrative

The Girl Scouts of North East Ohio will provide “Camperships” to underserved girls in the city of Cleveland, which provide support for girls from economically disadvantaged families to attend overnight Girl Scout camps. Camperships cost about \$400 per girl and will cover fees

Kara Hemphill

for the camp as well as all camping supplies and personal necessities. This includes a sleeping bag, a water bottle, bug spray, sunscreen, and shoes and a bathing suit if needed.

Camping is a great way for girls to explore leadership, build skills, and develop appreciation for nature. At camp, girls are encouraged to try new things, feel good about themselves, and experience activities that they would not normally be offered, such as sailing, creative arts, horseback riding, drama, and team activities. All summer camps offer a complete camp experience with both themed and traditional camp activities like crafts, songs, and campfires.

The mission of the Girl Scouts is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Girl Scout camp aligns with this mission by encouraging girl-led activities in which girls work together to learn teamwork and leadership in a fun environment. Camp programs are divided by age group and are specifically designed to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of each group.

Greater Cleveland is home to many GSNEO members. In 2013, GSNEO served 7,506 girls in Cuyahoga County, 1,182 girls in Geauga County, 1,825 girls in Lake County, 4,256 girls in Lorain County, and 1,933 girls in Medina County. Through Camperships, GSNEO can extend the opportunity to experience camp to more girls in the area. The \$10,000 grant from the George Gund Foundation will fund Camperships for 25 girls at \$400 per girl.

Girl Scouts employs a dedicated camp staff on-site to guide each girl's camp experience. A diverse staff is recruited from local and out-of-state communities. All staff members are screened, receive background checks, and are at least 18 years old. Younger staff members, ages 16-17, are considered junior staff and are supervised at all times. All camp staff are trained in safety and security, emergency procedures, programmatic elements, and are First Aid and CPR certified. Emergency care will be handled by local emergency responders or hospital emergency rooms if necessary. In addition, all three GSNEO camps – Ledgewood, Timberlane, and Sugarbush – are accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). Accredited camps must comply with 300 national standards for health and safety.

To evaluate the experience, all girls and parents will fill out a survey after returning from camp. The surveys will ask about the impact and effectiveness of the individual's camp experience. Surveys are normally sent out through email, but paper copies will be available for girls who need them.