



## The National Girl Scout Program Portfolio Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: What is the National Girl Scout Program Portfolio?**

A: In Fall 2011, the national program portfolio will consist of two products:

1. Leadership Journeys (core resource)
2. *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* (complementary resource)

The goal is a nationally consistent Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

### **Q: Why is a nationally consistent Girl Scout Leadership Experience important?**

A: Before the journeys were developed, Girl Scouts had dozens of different programs representing a wide array of choices for girls and volunteers. Although variety and choice are appealing in concept, the reality was that the volume of disparate programs confused volunteers and made it difficult for them to decide what to use. And since each troop within each council used different programs, girls across the country had vastly different Girl Scout experiences. Moreover, there was no clear story to tell about how a girl builds on what she's learning in each year of Girl Scouts. Most critically, there was a lack of alignment with our mission, since not all resources tied directly to our desired outcomes.

At the same time, research conducted by the Girl Scout Research Institute indicated that parents/guardians want their daughters to be part of a national leadership experience and that girls want to be part of something big ("many girls around the country are doing the same thing as me").

## **LEADERSHIP JOURNEYS**

### **Q: What should we be thinking about as we continue to utilize journeys?**

A: The following are some important key points to keep in mind regarding journeys:

- The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is comprised of two distinct components: the journeys, which develop girls' leadership ability through the three leadership keys (discover, connect, take action), and badges, which build girls' topic-specific skills. If volunteers only focus on one of those, they are not providing girls with the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, the world's best leadership development program for girls. Think of a journey award as a 360-degree view and a badge as zeroing in on something specific.
- Journeys were designed to be customizable, flexible and tailored to a group's interest. Girls and adults can determine together the format for their journey: how many sessions, what they'd like the journey to be and what field trips, experts and "side trips" they wish to add to make the journey as personal, intriguing and educational as they would like.
- Journeys are a way for girls to develop leadership, explore their interests, try new things, meet people and make their world better. Girls and adults are encouraged to think of the journey as a guide to discover, connect and take action.
- Adult guides are an integral part of the journeys. It is recommended that adults read through the guide once to get ideas about how they and the girls want to approach the journey. Then, adults can go back and look more closely at the Sample Sessions. The adult guide not only

lists Sample Sessions, but trip and team-building ideas as well plus plenty of tips for getting creative.

- Other activities are available through Girl Scouting for girls to do along with the journey. The sessions do not have to be done week after week, unless girls design it that way. Camping, badges, trips, the Cookie Program Activity, etc., can be woven throughout the year. Please visit the journeys maps at <http://www.girlscouts.org/program/journeys/maps> to get an overview of how the journeys fit with all the other Girl Scout activities.
- There are also resources such as *It's Your Journey—Customize It!* that support implementation of journeys.

**Q: How many Journey Awards are offered?**

A: There are nine Journey Awards each for Daisies, Juniors and Cadettes. Brownies are offered 12 Journey Awards and there are three Journey Awards each for Seniors and Ambassadors.

**Q: Are there plans to develop more journeys?**

A: No, not at this time.

**THE GIRL'S GUIDE TO GIRL SCOUTING**

**Q: What is the format for *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*, available for use in September 2011, will include badges, handbook sections, award logs, accessory pages and more. (Daisies will earn Petals instead of badges.) Each level will have its own *Girl's Guide* and it will be presented in a beautiful standard-size binder.

**Q: How do journeys and badges work together?**

A: *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* will work with national leadership journeys to add skill building to the leadership skills girls learn through the three keys of discover, connect and take action. Journeys are the only program resources that cover all 15 outcome indicators. Badges build specific skills and are primarily aimed at the discover—"girls develop a strong sense of self"—outcome indicator. National leadership journeys and *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* make up the program portfolio.

**Q: What badge categories are included in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: National proficiency badge categories within *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* will include Legacy, Financial Literacy, Cookie Business and Make Your Own.

**Q: What are the sections in the *Girl's Guide*?**

A: The three sections are: Handbook, Badges and My Girl Scouts. More specifically, the *Girl's Guide* includes the grade-level handbook, requirements for Legacy, Financial Literacy, Cookie Business and Make Your Own badges, plus information about earning Bridging and Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards (for Juniors through Ambassadors). There are also accessory pages such as scrapbooking pages.

**Q: What can be added?**

A: Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets can be added. A set includes the requirements for badges tied to each of the three journeys. The first three sets will include requirements for five badges. All physical badges are purchased separately and individually.

**Q: What are the seven Legacy badge topic areas?**

A: They are:

- Artist
- Athlete
- Citizen

- Cook
- First Aid
- The Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist

**Q: What can Daisies earn?**

A: Daisies will have a special approach. They will continue to earn Petals with new stories and activities and can now earn Financial Literacy and Cookie Business “Leaves” to go with their Petals. Daisies do not earn Make Your Own badges. Of course, they can earn their Leadership Journey Awards.

**Q: What can Ambassadors earn?**

A: Ambassadors can earn Legacy, Financial Literacy and Cookie Business badges plus one Make Your Own badge per year. They can also earn their Leadership Journey Awards.

**BADGE EARNING**

**Q: Will badges be simple enough for younger girls to lead themselves through the activities or will they need a volunteer to facilitate?**

A: All badge requirements are written in simple language to the girl. Younger girls may need a volunteer’s assistance.

**Q: How many Financial Literacy and Cookie Business badges can girls earn per level?**

A: Girls can earn two Financial Literacy and two Cookie Business badges per level except for Cadettes who can earn three.

**Q: Why are Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets not being offered to Ambassadors?**

A: Research shows juniors and seniors in high school are interested in earning fewer badges than girls at other levels; many are pursuing their Girl Scout Gold Awards and are busy with college preparation and other high school activities.

**Q: Do all badge categories, including Skill-Building, have five steps? What are the five steps to badge earning?**

A: Each badge has five steps. Girls complete all five to earn the badge. (There are three choices for completing each step. Girls need only do one.) The five steps vary depending on the skill girls are learning.

**Q: Is “Giving Service” one of the five steps to completing the badge?**

A: No. Service ideas are included so a girl can apply her new skill to help others. In the tradition of Girl Scouts, Juliette Gordon Low said, “a badge ... stands for one way a Girl Scout has prepared herself to help others.”

**Q: Can girls earn vintage badges (e.g., the Hostess badge from 1928) as a way to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Girl Scouts?**

A: With the release of *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting*, girls will have many relevant, grade-appropriate badges to complete and enjoy, including Legacy badges which honor the heritage of Girl Scouts while offering contemporary skill-building activities. Programmatically, vintage badges do not reflect today’s program or the lives of girls and as such, Girl Scouts USA (GSUSA) does not encourage having girls earn badges of long ago. For those who want to salute the Girl Scouts’ 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, GSUSA will offer a commemorative pin.

## **MAKE YOUR OWN BADGES**

### **Q: Will Make Your Own badges require council approval?**

A: No. To create and complete a Make Your Own badge, girls will work with volunteers or advisors. The last step to completion requires a discussion between the girl and an adult and will require an adult's signature.

### **Q: Once a girl creates her Make Your Own badge, can other girls earn it?**

A: When a girl earns her Make Your Own badge, she gains skills not only in the topic she has chosen but from the process of creating the badge. Therefore, girls can only earn the Make Your Own badges they create. If Make Your Own badges were available to all girls, they would lose their value as “make your own” as well as the intrinsic skills that come from creating, developing and completing a project.

### **Q: What will be the process for Make Your Own?**

A: To create the physical Make Your Own badge (in addition to developing the idea and the requirements), Brownies through Ambassadors will log onto (with adult supervision) a Make Your Own badge website. There, girls will choose a design icon from a gallery of pre-approved images. When they are finished designing, girls will submit their badges to the licensed vendor on the site who will produce and ship the badges.

### **Q: How many Make Your Own badges per level can a girl earn?**

A: Girls can earn one per year.

### **Q: Will all Make Your Own badges look the same?**

A: Make Your Own badges for Brownies through Ambassadors will have the appropriate grade-level shape. The border will match the grade-level color.

## **ORDERING AND MERCHANDISE**

### **Q: Why are Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets being sold separately?**

A: Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets were developed to support the core resource (Leadership Journeys) so girls could add on badges to their journeys that reflect their interests. This approach was chosen to provide choice and customizability—features girls, volunteers and parents/guardians told GSUSA during the research phase of development of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* were important.

Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets will include requirements for badge earning and are being offered as “sets” (rather than as individual badge requirements) because of the need to be cost-effective in packaging merchandise.

### **Q: What if girls only want to work on one extra badge? Do they still have to buy a badge activity set that includes all five?**

A: Girls need to purchase Skill-Building Badge Activity requirements in sets of five; they cannot buy them individually. The decision was made to offer Skill-Building Badge Activity requirements in sets because the cost of providing individual sheets with requirements was prohibitive.

### **Q: Do the Legacy and Financial Literacy badges come separately?**

A: No. Legacy, Financial Literacy and Cookie Business badges are included in the purchase price of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.

### **Q: Will badges be embroidered?**

A: Yes. Cookie Business badges will be a mix of “sublimation” and embroidery. Sublimation is a process whereby an image is treated with special ink and affixed to the fabric giving it a raised look.

**Q: How many badges are included in each *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: For Brownies, Juniors, Seniors and Ambassadors, 12 badges will be offered. Cadettes are offered 14. Daisies will be offered 10 Petals and Promise Center, two Financial Literacy and two Cookie Business "Leaves." Additionally, all levels are offered journey and other updated awards such as the Safety Award, and the new religious award, "My Promise, My Faith."

**Q: Will fun patches still be available?**

A: Yes. Fun patches, which girls receive when attending events, will remain.

**Q: What are the costs of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* and Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets?**

A: The price of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* is \$22.50. The Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets (each set contains earning requirements for five badges) cost \$4.00. To celebrate the Girl Scout Centennial and the inaugural year of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*, each troop that re-registers for 2011-12 **online** by the Early Bird Registration deadline of June 15, 2011, will receive a gift certificate for 25% off each *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* and one of three Skill-Building Badge Activity Sets purchased for each troop member from a River Valleys' Shop. Gift certificates can be redeemed between September 2011 and March 2012.

Additionally, each troop will receive 25% off an accompanying Skill-Building Badge Activity Set purchased (limit one single set only). The gift certificates can be redeemed between September 2011 and March 2012.

**OTHER EARNED AWARDS**

**Q: What is VIT? Does it replace LIT?**

A: The newly named VIT refers to Volunteer-in-Training. Yes, it replaces the LIT award (Leader-in-Training) and is earned by Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who want to mentor girls in a pathway other than the camp pathway.

**Q: Will Program Aide (PA) and Counselor-in-Training (CIT) continue?**

A: Yes, and they will be included in the *Girl's Guide* for the designated levels. As a note, these awards will have the fewest changes so you can continue to use the current awards/guidelines with confidence until new awards/guidelines are released.

**Q: Will Service Bars continue?**

A: Yes. Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors will continue to earn Community Service Bars. This award will encourage girls to practice the values of the Promise and Law as they make a difference in their communities. Two Service Bars will be offered at each level: Community Service Bars, whereby a girl volunteers 20 hours of service to a community organization, and the Service to Girl Scouting Bar, whereby a girl volunteers 20 hours to the Girl Scout organization.

**Q: What is the difference between Service and Take Action projects?**

A: When girls pursue service projects, they are addressing an immediate, short-term need in the community. When girls pursue Take Action projects, they take time to identify and understand the root cause of the issue they are addressing. For example, as service projects, girls might organize a book or clothing drive, paint walls to cover up graffiti, or hold a one-time march or fair to highlight a community problem. Although these projects address a need in the community, they do so for only a short period of time.

A Take Action project picks up from where a short-term project leaves off. For example, girls organizing the book or clothing drive could start a Take Action project by creating a clothes closet for

the community. The girls who painted the walls to cover up graffiti can create a club that travels around the city painting beautiful murals on buildings that have been defaced. And the girls who held the march or fair could expand the event to include community artisans and make it an annual gathering.

An easy way to remember the difference between short-term service projects and Take Action projects rests on whether the project is being done *for* the community or *with* the community. If a girl is doing something *for* the community, most likely she is working on a short-term service project. If she is doing something *with* the community, she is working on a Take Action project.

**Q: What are the requirements for the new Journey Summit Pin?**

A: When a girl completes all three journeys at her level, she earns the Journey Summit Pin. Earning this award demonstrates that a girl knows “to her core” what it means to be a leader.

**Q: Does the My Promise, My Faith pin replace religious awards? Will GSUSA still offer the other religious awards through PRAY?**

A: GSUSA is proud to offer girls the opportunity to deepen their faith by earning the My Promise, My Faith pin—the only national faith award girls can earn. PRAY is a private vendor and not connected to GSUSA. Girls can continue to earn PRAY awards administered through their individual faith communities.

**Q: I thought Girl Scouts were not to work on faith awards during meetings. Are the new religious awards designed for girls to work on their own?**

A: The My Promise, My Faith pin is designed for individuals, not as a group award.

**Q: Will girls earn My Promise, My Faith pins every year or at every level?**

A: Girls can earn one pin every year. By the time a girl goes from Daisy to Ambassador, she can earn 13 pins.

**Q: What will happen with Troop’s Own and Council’s Own? Will new guidelines be issued?**

A: GSUSA will release new guidelines for national badges developed within councils. Troop’s Own will be retired and girls may develop a Make Your Own badge.

## **TRANSITION TO NEW RESOURCES**

**Q: How do we transition girls to the new resources?**

A: Girls should set their sights on doing the journey for the grade they’ll be entering this fall, per Program Essentials. In a nutshell, girls in their first year of a Program Grade Level do the journey from the *It’s Your World—Change It!* series and girls in their second year of a Program Grade Level should do either the journey from *It’s Your Planet—Love It!* series or the *It’s Your Story—Tell It!* series.

Program Essentials Charts will be updated for 2011-2012 to reflect many of the new badge choices in *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting*.

Girls who have already started working on an earned award that is being retired will have until September 2012 to complete its requirements, however, please be aware that the physical patch may no longer be available and the 2011-2012 Program Essentials Charts won’t include any retired awards.

**Q: How are the retired awards going to be phased out? What is the timeline?**

A: GSUSA began streamlining inventory (Try-Its, Junior badges, Interest Project patches, handbooks, etc.) in 2010. The first phase began in June 2010. The second phase continued in December 2010.

The third phase will take place in June 2011. Please check with the River Valleys' Shops on available inventory.

**Q: What is happening with the Junior Signs? Will Signs be included in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: Junior Signs are being retired.

## **BRIDGING**

**Q: Will bridging requirements be offered in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: Yes, bridging requirements for each level will be included.

## **BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD AWARDS**

**Q: Will there be any changes in the way girls earn the Girl Scout Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards?**

A: No. Requirements for earning Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards—revised in 2009—are the same and will be included in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* for the appropriate level. To review the guidelines, visit

[http://www.girlscoutsrv.org/activities\\_for\\_girls/badges\\_and\\_awards/gold\\_silver\\_bronze\\_awards](http://www.girlscoutsrv.org/activities_for_girls/badges_and_awards/gold_silver_bronze_awards)

**Q: Will the new badges be integrated into the steps for earning the Bronze, Silver and/or Gold Awards?**

A: No. The steps leading up to the final Take Action Project for each higher award will continue to be focused on earning Journey Awards.

## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

**Q: Will there be corresponding facilitators' or volunteers' guides to *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*?**

A: Adult guides are not being offered. Material in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* is written to the girl with clarity and easy-to-follow steps. Volunteers will not need adult guides to help girls with their badges. Just as with journeys, volunteers will experience "learning by doing" along with the girls.

**Q: Will *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* be available in Spanish?**

A: There are no plans to translate *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*. If funding for translation becomes available, Spanish-language versions will be produced.

**Q: Is *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* designed for girls to use in all pathways or just troop?**

A: Girls can use *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* in all pathways as well as on their own.

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