



Dear Members,

Self-confidence, responsibility, integrity, expertise, creativity, decisiveness, and teamwork—these are the skills of a great leader. And these are skills that today's girls are learning in Girl Scouts as they become tomorrow's leaders.

Building today's girls into tomorrow's leaders' takes strong partnerships: partnerships with girls, with adult volunteers, with communities, with corporations, with other not-for-profits, with donors and with Girl Scouts of the USA.

At the 52<sup>nd</sup> GSUSA National Council Session in November 2011, GSUSA approved the Council Service Fee "CSF" after recognizing the financial realities of operating a local Girl Scout Council in today's economy. GSUSA felt strongly that adding the CSF was necessary given the substantial value of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

The annual National Membership fee of \$15 that each member pays goes directly to the Girl Scouts of the USA. None of that annual membership fee stays locally within our council making it difficult to facilitate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience at the local level.

A task force of volunteers and staff was formed to explore the idea. The group analyzed membership and financial data, looked at both the last three years and projections for the next three years. Council held discussions with the Association Chairs to gather their feedback. All this information was carefully considered by the Board of Directors before voting on July 9, 2013 to implement a Council Service Fee of \$15 per girl with 2014-2015 membership year. Their decision was presented to the membership at the Council's Annual Meeting on November 23, 2013.

The Council Service Fee will support the operation of GSCTF as our council heavily subsidizes the cost of girl activities, events, adult leadership development and council-sponsored programs. This includes:

- General operating expenses of all council properties, service centers, and camps including utilities, insurance, maintenance and capital expenses. The property insurance for the camps increased 20%, which includes buildings that are now considered in flood areas, electricity, water and sewer expenses, which are escalating. Aging buildings and equipment require additional funds to maintain and/or replace.
- Supporting technology initiatives such as online registration, e-newsletters, websites, event calendars and support of other technological advances. Increase cost to develop and maintain council website with required features

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for store purchases, online program registration and membership registration.

- Providing the quality customer care and service necessary to manage a membership of 8,348 girls and 3,285 volunteers.
- Background checks of volunteers and staff to ensure the safety of girls.
- Protecting girls and adults by providing liability insurance coverage for all council approved events, activities and non-Girl Scout facility use.
- Providing membership and camping financial assistance to girls in financial need.
- Process and placement of girls in various membership pathways.

The Council Service Fees, along with product sales, corporate and foundation support, and gifts from families and friends of Girl Scouting, will give us the combined resources needed to get to deliver the premiere leadership program for girls, at the low cost of \$280 per girl per year.

Just as we have been hit with rising costs, you have too. With this in mind, girls who register as a Girl Scout member by June 14, 2014 during our Early Bird Membership Registration Period, will receive a coupon good for \$5 off a \$15 purchase in our council shop (not online) or for \$5 off a 1 week of GSCTF Summer Camp during the summer 2014.

More good news for troops registering their girl members by June 14, we have developed a 4 Step Cookie Bonus Incentive program that will provide the opportunity for troops to receive cookie incentives that will allow for up to .06 cents bonus for each box of cookie sold during the 2015 Cookie Sale.

Our success will be measured not by numbers, but by the excitement on the face of every girl who experiences a Girl Scout field trip for the first time, or by the sense of accomplishment she feels earning a Girl Scout badge. Success will also be measured by the successes she has later in life as a result of her Girl Scout experiences. We owe it to our girls to give them the opportunity to be the leaders they want to be, to be the leaders the world needs them to be.

Thank you for supporting Girl Scouts in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

Yours in Girl Scouting,



Johnette Hardiman  
Chair, Board of Directors



Maria D. Tejera  
Chief Executive Officer

