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THE PATCH CONNECTION, INC.
1-888-728-2426

Girl Scout & Business and Professional Women Leadership Patch Project

How do you meet professionals? How do you find out what careers are available for women? How do you establish a link between yourself and professional women in your community? In this project, you seek out professional women who are willing to work with Girl Scouts in a formal mentorship program. You learn about leadership, self-esteem, negotiation skills, parliamentary procedure, and legislation which impacts women. You gain an insight into yourself and your future while establishing lasting friendships.

To earn the GS/BPW Patch, a Girl Scout must complete eight of the following activities, including the three with asterisks:

1. *Attend a leadership conference where you attend workshops on self-esteem, sexual harassment, total quality "Teen Management", etc. This can be a leadership conference of any kind with similar workshops. For example, attend the BPW Youth Leadership Conference, the Edith Macy Youth Leadership Conferences, your school, or your local GS Youth Leadership conferences.
2. Invite local BPW members to talk with your Girl Scout troop. Discuss what each organization does and what their goals are. If there is no local BPW group, call 1-800-469-7279 and ask for the nearest organization.
3. Attend two meetings of organizations founded BY and FOR women - this could be a BPW meeting and another meeting of your choice. For example - a Young Women's Christian Association, Women in Communication, or Women In Science and Engineering. Discover their histories, their services for women and the community. Upon completion of the meeting, analyze in writing the following: What new things did you learn? How do you envision using this information and individuals to meet your personal goals?
4. * Write a personal letter concerning an issue of importance to you and women in general to an elected official, example - Congress person, Senator, Assembly person, etc. Write as many letters as needed until you receive a response.
5. Learn how to organize an event, meeting, or activity with mentoring from BPW members, using parliamentary procedures.
6. * Actively participate in a Career Development Training for a minimum of three hours. Discuss topics such as communications, negotiations, and networking. This training could take place at a BPW Youth Leadership Conference, a BPW Individual Program event, or a Rotary Group Conference.
7. Conduct a regular meeting of your GS troop or any other type meeting and invite a parliamentarian to observe. At the end of your meeting, ask the

- parliamentarian to critique and correct your mistakes for future meetings. Conduct your next meeting, paying particular attention not to make the same mistakes. You should be conducting your meetings according to Roberts Rules of Order. Write a comparative analysis of your very first meeting when the parliamentarian observed and your next meeting. Invite the parliamentarian to a future meeting to discuss your improvements.
8. Conduct and/or participate in community events telling the Girl Scout story, and attend at least three community organizational meetings. Discuss what type of activities you or your troop participates in. Tell about the different age groups in Girl Scouting. In what statewide, nationwide, and international events/trips can girls participate?
 9. Prepare an essay, poem, or pamphlet to support Women's History Month. Seek out women in the community to act as role models. After you have gathered all of your information, publicize the results. For example, use your local newspaper.
 10. Become familiar with the BPW National/State Legislative Platform which includes the Introduction, Passage, and Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. Support legislation which elevates the status of all women, and work to achieve pay equity. Debate these issues with a group of individuals including a BPW representative and members of your troop. Express your feelings on the legislative platform.
 11. Participate in the BPW's Mentoring/Choices Program or Regional Program of Excellence. Keep a log or a diary in which you write your feelings and meetings with your mentor. After the program is over, give an oral presentation to a group of friends, Girl Scout troop, etc. about your experiences in the program. Seek out a BPW member or another professional woman willing to become a mentor.

For more information or assistance, call: Helen Rico, 315-336-1107, or e-mail hrico@twcny.rr.com.

To receive the GS/BPW Patch upon completion of the requirements, please send a check payable to Helen Rico for \$3.50 for each patch ordered. The Girl Scout Leader must submit a brief statement verifying that the Girl Scout has completed the requirements. Also include 1) name of the Senior Girl Scout receiving the patch, 2) Name and Signature of Girl Scout Leader, and 3) Name and address of where patch is to be mailed.

Send the above to Helen Rico, 7980 River Road, Rome, New York 13440

Frequently Asked Questions

How did the Girl Scout Interest Project Patch Start? In 1996, Kristina Lynn Rico (then a senior at Rome Free Academy in Rome, New York) was a Senior Girl Scout (GS) in Troop 55S, Foothills Girl Scout Council, as well as a student member of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Rome New York. While contemplating what to do for her Girl Scout Gold Project*, the idea of partnering BPW members and Girl Scouts seemed a like a natural project. She knew many of the Girl Scouts (ages 12-18) were unclear about their goals and had not considered seeking out professional women regarding their careers. She believed there was a great need to place Girl Scouts with businesswomen on a more formal basis.

Kristina chose this project because, in her words: "There are many choices young women have to make during their adolescent years. One of BPW's goals is to become mentors to young women about to complete high school and enter college, thereby raising their awareness of non-traditional occupations, providing workshops on self-esteem, sexual harassment, and total quality management. By working with BPW, Girl Scouts will have the opportunity to excel to their fullest potential. They will have access to hundreds of workingwomen who may have been Girl Scouts or college students. This relationship will be challenging to both girls and workingwomen. They will come together to exchange ideas of what our society should be concentrating on, and to gain assistance on the transition from "girl-hood to women-hood" in terms of discussions, meetings, and networking."

Is this sanctioned patch? Yes. The leadership patch was developed by the New York State Council and has received approval from GSUSA as a locally developed patch. Girl Scouts can wear the patch on the reverse side of the sash.

Who can earn the GS/BPW Patch? Any Girl Scout (ages 12-18) who has completed the requirements.

Can you substitute requirements in the patch? That is a difficult question to answer: Normally yes you can - assuming you have an alternate way of meeting the intention of the criteria. For example, if your BPW organization does not support a youth leadership event, but the Girl Scout has participated in a leadership event held at Edith Macy (training center for Girl Scouts), then it is an acceptable substitute. If you are in doubt, contact Helen Rico at hrico@twcny.rr.com.

How does my BPW organization start this effort? At your state meeting, appoint a BPW/GS chair to work the details. The chair should do the following:

Step 1: Identify all the Girl Scout councils in your state and match them to BPW districts and locals. Your local Girl Scout office can provide a coded listing containing the name and contact information of the Girl Scout Council and its Executive Director.

Step 2: Identify BPW members in your state who are interested in mentoring the Girl Scouts and mail them the criteria. This responsibility could be given to the status of women chair, GS Link or Issue management/Program chairs, District Director (DD) or Local

Presidents. It is up to you decide how you want to implement it throughout your state.

Step 3: After you have secured the mentors, send a letter to each Girl Scout Executive Director (to forward to the By Girl For Girl (BGFG) board and Membership Director) describing the patch, with the criteria, and identifying the BPW women in their area who would serve as mentors to the girls. Ask for someone in the GS Council to get back to you to set up your first meeting.

Step 4: Send a letter with the criteria to each District Director (DD) and/or Local President, identifying the mentors in their area who have agreed to work with the Girl Scouts. This is necessary to keep the DDs informed as to what their locals are doing.

Step 5: Check periodically with the mentors, DDs, and L/Os for their status

Step 6: Finally, be enthusiastic and make it a WIN-WIN scenario.

- For those unfamiliar with the Girl Scout Gold Award: It is the highest honor in Girl Scouting. It consists of an application, containing five steps: (1) completing four interest project patches (each one takes 24 hours), (2) earning the Career Exploration Pin and attaching a current resume, (3) earning the Senior Leadership Award by logging at least 30 hours in two or more activities, (4) completing the Senior Challenge by answering questions regarding her goals - short and long term, designing a self-development plan, and developing values for living. Each of the first four steps requires a self-evaluation. The final step of the application process is to develop the Project Plan. After the entire application process was reviewed, her actual gold project began and she was assigned a Girl Scout mentor.