



GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS PARTNERS WITH NASA AND SETI INSTITUTE TO PILOT NEW SPACE SCIENCE BADGES

Local Council is Among Eleven Nationally to Skyrocket Girls' Interest in STEM with New Program, Reaching for the Stars: NASA Science for Girl Scouts

BOSTON, MA (August 17, 2017)—Today, Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts (GSEMA) announced its new partnership with NASA. GSEMA is one of 11 Girl Scout councils nationwide selected to participate in a pilot for a five-year program called Reaching for the Stars: NASA Science for Girl Scouts. Funded by NASA's Science Mission Directorate and led by SETI Institute, the 18-month pilot offers girls of all grade levels opportunities to earn new Space Science badges as they explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

At a time when women in the workforce are often vastly underrepresented in STEM fields, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and GSEMA are offering girls as young as five years old female-driven programs where they can build the confidence and skills to take their STEM interest to the next level.

The new Space Science badges at the center of the collaboration, combined with GSEMA's larger suite of STEM programming, provide a seamless pathway for girls to develop a lifetime love of the cosmos, and even explore careers in the field. Badges are offered at every grade level, from Daisies in kindergarten to Ambassadors in grades 11-12. Starting by introducing the fundamentals of space science, the badges build a progression of skills, leading to girls using current NASA research to make their own discoveries.

"It is an honor for our girls to be invited to participate in NASA's program and earn these new Space Science badges," said Patricia A. Parcellin, Chief Executive Officer, Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. "Based on our experience offering innovative STEM programs, we know our girl members respond to opportunities to discover the excitement of STEM in a supportive, girl-centered environment, and help blaze a path for future Girl Scouts nationwide."

Girl Scouts has long been committed to challenging gender stereotypes and providing girls of all ages with interactive and engaging programs that increase their interest in STEM. In fact, the Girl Scout Research Institute's [The Girl Scout Impact Study](#) (2017) found that Girl Scouts are more likely than non-Girl Scouts (60 percent versus 35 percent) to participate in STEM activities, such as conducting science experiments, designing video games, and building robots. In addition, Girl Scouts also provides a supportive all-girl environment that fosters social, emotional, and leadership development—the ingredients girls need to develop the confidence to persevere and succeed.

“Girl Scouts, SETI Institute, and NASA have a rich heritage of working together to give girls more opportunities to learn about space science, and we are excited to advance the cause,” said SETI Institute Director of Education Edna DeVore. “With the resilience, ingenuity, and courage Girl Scouts instills in girls, it’s no surprise that many female astronauts in the United States are Girl Scout alumnae. We recognize today’s girls are tomorrow’s STEM leaders, and with the new badges and programming, Girl Scouts everywhere will have access to even more of these opportunities, building the next generation of women leaders in STEM that we so desperately need.”

Reaching for the Stars: NASA Science for Girl Scouts partners also include Girl Scouts of Northern California, the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, the University of Arizona, and ARIES Scientific. To join or volunteer, visit www.gsema.org/join.

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We're Girl Scouts Eastern Massachusetts (GSEMA) We're 50,000 strong, with 35,000 girls and 15,000 volunteers in 178 communities in eastern Massachusetts who believe in the power of every G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)[™] to change the world. Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. GSEMA is the 10th largest Girl Scout council in the United States, building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. To volunteer, reconnect, donate, join, or learn more, visit www.gsema.org.

About SETI Institute

The mission of the Institute is to explore, understand, and explain the origin and nature of life in the universe, and to apply the knowledge gained to inspire and guide present and future generations. They have a passion for discovery, and for sharing knowledge as scientific ambassadors to the public, the press, and the government.

The SETI Institute is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to scientific research, education, and public outreach. [Founded in November 1984](#), the SETI Institute began operations on February 1, 1985. Today it employs over 130 scientists, educators, and support staff. Research at the Institute is anchored by three Centers: the [Carl Sagan Center for the Study of Life in the Universe](#), the [Center for Education](#), and the Center for Public Outreach. To connect with the Institute, visit www.seti.org.

About NASA

NASA leads the Nation on a great journey of discovery, seeking new knowledge and understanding of our Sun, Earth, solar system, and the universe. The NASA Science Mission Directorate (SMD) *searches for* answers across three overarching themes: Safeguarding and improving life on Earth, searching for life elsewhere, and *discovering the secrets of the Universe*. SMD's STEM Science Activation program advances STEM to improve U.S. scientific literacy through the leveraging of partners such as GSUSA and SETI.

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