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GSOSW Media Contact

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As the November 3 General Election Approaches, Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington Offers Civic Engagement throughout Region

PORTLAND, OR. – August 25, 2020 – As the November 3 General Election approaches, Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington (GSOSW) is offering a variety of nonpartisan civic engagement opportunities for Girl Scouts throughout the region. The civic learning opportunities have been curated and designed to educate, inspire, prepare and mobilize girls to lead positive change through civic action.

“We aim to connect Girl Scouts to their role as citizens and encourage them to become civically engaged,” said Maureen Kenney, Public Relations and Advocacy Manager for GSOSW. “We want girls to learn about the suffrage and historical progression of voting rights—and have conversations about that—as well as understand how our voting process works and how to make their voices heard in government. Girls need to know that they have the power make a difference and influence positive social change.”

Chalk the Vote with GSOSW—August 26, 2020 (Women’s Equality Day)

GSOSW has partnered with the Oregon Women's History Consortium and the Oregon Historical Society to “Chalk the Vote” on August 26, 2020.

By participating, Girl Scouts will learn about the five legislative remedies that extended the right to vote to vast numbers of citizens who had previously been denied full citizenship. Each of these pieces of legislation righted previous wrongs by adding new voices to the governance of our nation, and moved us closer to the stated equality laid out in our nation’s founding documents.

The initiative focuses on the following five voting rights amendments:

15th Amendment (1870):

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

19th Amendment (1920):

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

24th Amendment (1964):

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Voting Rights Act (1965):

An act to enforce the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States . . . No voting qualifications or prerequisites to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.

26th Amendment (1971):

The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.

To honor all of these important changes to our state's and our nation's history of voting rights, all local Girl Scouts are being invited to join GSOSW as we "Chalk the Vote" on August 26, 2020 (Women's Equality Day).

Participating Girl Scouts will:

1. **Select** the key voting rights amendment/s they wish to write out in chalk;
2. **Chalk the Vote** in their driveway and/or on pavement in a safe, public space—where they have obtained permission to do so—while observing GSOSW and public health COVID-19 guidelines and safe physical distancing; and,
3. **Photograph** what they chalked and share it via social media using the hashtag #ChalkTheVoteOR

To learn more about Chalk the Vote, please visit: <http://www.oregonwomenshistory.org/uncategorized/chalk-the-vote/>

Citizen and Democracy Badges—Sponsored by The Oregon Clinic Through 2020

The Oregon Clinic has underwritten the cost of Girl Scout Citizen and Democracy badges for local Girl Scouts in Oregon and Southwest Washington through the end of 2020.

“When girls are empowered to understand their government and the world around them, they’re more likely to contribute their voices and advocate for causes they believe in. I didn’t want money to be a barrier for any girl in our community who wants to learn these important leadership skills,” explained Dr. Lara Williams, OBGYN at The Oregon Clinic. “My hope is that the girls who pursue these badges will gain the confidence to get involved and advocate for positive change in their own communities.”

Girl Scouts throughout the region who earn select Citizen badges through the end of 2020 will now receive them free, courtesy of The Oregon Clinic. This includes the Good Neighbor, Celebrating Community, Inside Government, Finding Common Ground, Behind the Ballot, and Public Policy badges, and any of [Girl Scouts’ newly-released Democracy badges](#) for all grade levels.

NEW Democracy Badges

Girls gain an in-depth understanding of how local, state, and federal government works, preparing them to be voters, activists, and, potentially, political leaders. They research laws and how they’re created, voting and the electoral college, the representation of women in government, and more. They also research their local government officials and are encouraged to meet them.

Citizen Badges

Girl Scouts’ six Citizen Badges—Good Neighbor, Celebrating Community, Inside Government, Finding Common Ground, Behind the Ballot, and Public Policy—engage girls in age-appropriate activities involving community service, public policy, government, voting, and more. Over time, the badges build girls’ knowledge of local and global communities and show them how their actions as citizens make the world better for everyone.

GSOSW Partnership with Multnomah County Elections

Just ahead of the November 3 General Election, Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington, in partnership with Multnomah County Elections, will provide two virtual civic education opportunities for local Girl Scouts:

All About Voting on September 15, 2020—with Multnomah County Elections

On September 15, 2020, from 4-4:30 p.m., GSOSW and Multnomah County Elections will offer a Facebook Live Q&A with Elections staff. Local Girl Scouts will learn about and ask questions on topics such as:

- How to register to vote
- Making a plan to vote
- Elections security

Path of the Ballot on October 29, 2020—with Multnomah County Elections

Oregon is a "vote-by-mail" state. Every registered voter can mail in or drop off their ballot instead of standing in line at a polling place. But then what? On October 29, 2020, from 4-4:30 p.m. local Girl Scouts will get to take an up-close, virtual look at how ballots are processed in Multnomah County.

"We're excited to provide Girl Scouts with a close up, virtual look at how our elections function," says Catherine McMullen, Voter Education and Outreach Program Specialist for Multnomah County Elections. "Our hope is that girls from our community will be inspired to register to vote and participate in democracy."

GSOSW to Launch Civic Leadership Challenge Patch Program this Fall

GSOSW is currently developing a Civic Leadership Challenge patch program for all Girl Scout grade levels. From November 2020 through March 2021, GSOSW will be releasing a new civic leadership challenge each month for girls to complete. Once they have completed each challenge, Girl Scouts will earn the Civic Leadership Challenge patch, just in time to celebrate Girl Scout Leadership Day in March 2021. From advocacy to campaigning, activism to elections, girls will immerse themselves in a variety of civic actions. "We are hoping to showcase to girls that civic engagement is so much more than just voting in an election," says Tessa Crosby, Program Team Manager at GSOSW. "There are many different ways to be civically active."

GSOSW's Civic Leadership Challenge patch program will launch in late October 2020.

Girl Scout Ranger 19th Amendment Centennial Program

This year Girl Scouts of the USA, in partnership with the National Parks Service, is offering a limited-edition commemorative patch for Girl Scouts participating in activities focusing on the significance of the 19th Amendment. This special program offers pathways for Girl Scouts to learn about women's history and the suffrage movement through discovering, connecting, and taking action to make the world a better place. To learn more, visit [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov).

Girl Scouts' History of Civic Engagement

Since its founding in 1912, Girl Scouts has emphasized the importance of civic engagement, by teaching and encouraging girls to create positive change in their communities through advocacy and action. Girl Scouts learn to stand up for what they believe in, identify issues they care about, and develop leadership skills to make the world a better place. Girl Scouts has a century of success reflected in the realm of public service by the fact that 73 percent of female U.S. Senators and 100 percent of female U.S. Secretaries of State are Girl Scout alums.

About Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington

In partnership with nearly 8,000 adult members, Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington prepares more than 14,300 girls in grades K-12 for a lifetime of leadership, adventure and success. GSOSW's programs in civic engagement, the outdoors and STEM serve girls in 35 counties in Oregon, and Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties in Southwest Washington. The Girl Scout mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. For more information, please visit [girlscoutsosw.org](https://www.girlscoutsosw.org). Contact answers@girlscoutsosw.org with questions.

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