



For Immediate Release
Monday, September 1, 2008

Contact:
Ann Saris, VP of Brand and Marketing
715.423.6360
asaris@gsnwgl.org

Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Inc.
P.O. Box 9427, Green Bay, WI 54308-9427
920.469.4860 / 888.747.6945
www.gsnwgl.org

September...the air cools, leaves begin to change, students return, and Girl Scouts bridge to a new level. You have to appreciate these signs and stages of development.

It's a paramount time for Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, too, as we mark the first true implementation of our new structure and systems, in their entirety. We've worked for four months to build the highest capacity council we've ever had in this community, in order to launch and properly support the groundbreaking new Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Just as students embark on a higher platform in their new grade level, Girl Scouts across the country break ground this month in a new program model, encompassing not only what girls do in Girl Scouting, but how they experience it and benefit from it, too.

I have a 'thought-a-day' calendar on my desk (quotes, of course), and one recently read "If you want to see your daughter succeed, don't just teach her to add and subtract, teach her to deduct." (Joan Rosenberg) What a great line! These days, we see that what a girl really needs, besides strength in the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic, science and technology, is a keen sense of reasoning, rationality and responsibility. With this repertoire, she can pull everything together into a holistic view of the world that makes her understanding, dutiful, and empowered to do what needs to be done – for herself and the world at large.

This captures the essence of the new Girl Scout Leadership Experience. It's built on three pillars, or keys, to leadership development. To be a leader, one must first have a deep and true understanding of who they are as an individual - their strengths, interests, and areas for improvement. Next, a leader needs the ability to truly connect to other people, all kinds of people – alike, different, purple, orange, quiet, loud – and rally them around a common idea or goal. And finally, a leader must combine these skills with an ability to recognize that which needs doing, to form a plan, and to then "get 'r done" – pooling the strengths and passions of all involved.

Girls need the skills, the courage and the confidence to be leaders primarily in their own lives. In this way, they avoid costly behaviors, become role models for peers, and end up being positive leaders for our families, communities, corporations or world...without even thinking about it.

Ann Saris is VP of Brand and Marketing for Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Inc., serving 24,000 girls and 6,600 volunteers in 58 counties across Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

###