



Questions from the Stewardship Webinar—September 9, 2020

GENERAL

How many people attended the webinar?

One thousand and seventy-one members attended the Stewardship Webinar on Wednesday, September 9.

Will the presentation, recording and slides, be shared?

The presentation, recording and slides are available now for Girl Scout members to watch via <https://www.girlscouts.org/stewardship>.

Will the keynote on October 3 be shared following the event?

Yes, like the Stewardship Report Webinar, the recording of the Keynote Presentations event are available for Girl Scout members to watch via <https://www.girlscouts.org/ncskeynote>.

We have amazing Girl Scout stories to tell, how do we get the word out?

We would love to hear your stories! If you are a parent, volunteer, or alum with an inspiring Girl Scout story to tell, we are always looking for ways to highlight how Girl Scouts are making our world a better place on our blog, on social media, and more. Please learn more about sharing your story (and read some others' stories on this page while you're at it) and we may contact you to learn more and feature you or your troop in an upcoming article or post:

<https://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/our-stories/share-your-story.html>

PROGRAMMING

Why are there no new Outdoor badges planned for the 2021 membership year?

While there are no plans for new Outdoor badges or programming in the 2021 membership year, we're committed this membership year to modernizing 75 badges (35% of our legacy portfolio) for digital delivery, of which 12 relate to our Outdoor program pillar.

We are focused on providing additional support to volunteers for existing program, especially to deliver the existing program virtually in this time of COVID-19. Also, over the past three years, we launched 96 new badges, out of which 17 related to the outdoors. In 2019 alone, girls earned more than 780,000 outdoor badges. Additionally, this September, we celebrated our second annual Girl Scouts Love State Parks event in all 50 states, and we are already planning for our third annual celebration in 2021.

When will an update be shared on the Trailblazer program?

The Trailblazer Troop Guidelines were released in October 2019 to support councils' efforts to develop special interest troops. As part of the older girl strategy, GSUSA will continue to support councils in this work and look for opportunities to further develop the program.

What is girl program and volunteer development?

GSUSA continues to develop our girl program, which consists of the many experiences we offer Girl Scouts, all based in the [Girl Scout Leadership Experience](#), and volunteer support resources. We are committed to providing ongoing and growing support for our volunteers and troop leaders. GSUSA passionately champions Girl Scouts as an unrivaled leadership experience for girls, with decades of proven program outcomes, while embracing the challenges, together.

In the past three years, we have developed new badges and awards, developed the next generation of Volunteer Systems and gsEvents on the Movement's common technology platform, continued development of GoGold2.0, the Volunteer Toolkit, and launched of gsLearn for online volunteer training, and safety and security recommendations for volunteer management and girl activities.

The continued evolution of our Customer Engagement Initiative (CEI), including Volunteer Systems 2.0, gsEvents, and an upgraded VTK, allows us to build a stable and scalable foundation for future technology investments, while improving the customer experience. We continue to implement key improvements for new members and councils, including easier online troop start-up, and a wider listing of opportunities and events.

What data does the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) provide? Is it possible to highlight the most popular badges?

VTK provides year plan information, meeting counts, and achievements earned in raw form to GSUSA teams for the creation of dashboards built for each council on a quarterly basis. Currently, the most used Year Plans are shared with councils and those are downloadable on demand by councils' VTK admins. And thanks for asking, based on your question, noting or highlighting the most used meetings to display for users could be an enhancement in the future.

Do we have standardized guidelines for the Safety Activity Checkpoints across councils?

GSUSA's Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) offers a comprehensive approach to provide a safety guideline for all volunteers from a national perspective—not from a local perspective where local norms, conditions, and statutes may vary. For this reason, almost all councils will slightly tailor their SAC to accommodate specific needs and norms while ensuring that compliance to local statutes and generally accepted safety standards specific to an individual geographic region are met.

GIRL SCOUT COOKIE PROGRAM

Why don't all councils have the same cookies?

Each Girl Scout council chooses a licensed baker, either ABC Bakers or Little Brownie Bakers. Each baker uses different names for some cookies. So, a cookie may be called Trefoils® when baked by one baker and Shortbread when baked by the other. The two cookies look and taste similar, but the name of the cookie and the recipe are dependent on the baker. The exceptions are Thin Mints® as well as Girl Scout S'mores™, which are the names used by both bakers.

Do councils have to agree to one baker, or can they use different bakers?

Councils must choose one of the two bakers—either ABC Bakers or Little Brownie Bakers.

Did Girl Scouts of the USA profit from the Digital Cookie sale? If so, how much? Did any profits go back to the councils?

Girl Scout councils do not provide any portion of their revenue from participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program to Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), and no other revenue from cookie sales goes to GSUSA.

While GSUSA does not receive any revenue from the cookie program, GSUSA is paid a royalty by its licensed bakers for use of Girl Scout trademarks based on gross annual sales. GSUSA

provides support for the cookie program via contractual services and also approves all program, marketing, and sales materials developed by the bakers.

Why do cookies have different prices based on the location?

Each of Girl Scouts' 111 councils determines the price of Girl Scout Cookies in its area, based on the local market.

What are "cookie credits?"

In many councils, a girl will earn "cookie credits" (which may be referred to by different names, such as "cookie dough"), after she meets certain goals, which may be used toward council program fees, travel, or Girl Scout-related purchases in the council shop.

Was the national organization investing in the ABC Smart Cookie platform in addition to LBB's Digital Cookie?

GSUSA recognizes the importance of giving girls the opportunity to learn 21st century entrepreneurial skills through their participation in the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Our plans include developing the technology that will give all Girl Scouts, regardless of the baker their council uses, the chance to acquire these skills by running a virtual cookie sale.

FINANCIAL

Does GSUSA provide financial assistance to councils?

Yes, during the past triennium, GSUSA has distributed \$18.3 million in direct financial support to councils during the period. Per page 66 of the Stewardship Report, GSUSA also provides numerous means of ongoing support to councils, as listed below.

The GSUSA Customer Office provides comprehensive support to councils to improve the sustainability and overall health of the Movement and ultimately reach and serve more girls.

Areas of support include:

- Movement membership strategy and operations that advance the mission of Girl Scouts; cultivation of national partnerships that support membership recruitment, retention, and relevancy; and council property strategy and support.
- Ongoing development of girl program and volunteer support resources. In the last triennium, this includes the development of new badges and awards, development of the next generation of Volunteer Systems and gsEvents on the Movement's common

technology platform, continued development of GoGold2.0, the Volunteer Toolkit, and launch of gsLearn for online volunteer training, and safety and security recommendations for volunteer management and girl activities.

- Council consulting services in the areas of council leadership and operations, including membership, governance, finance, and property; council staff training, including onboarding for new board chairs, CEOs, COOs, and CFOs on their respective areas of council management; skill-building training programs such as Sandler Sales Training and the Mission Delivery Coach program; national council leadership convenings, including in-person conferences such as the Annual Membership Conference in 2019 and 2020; and online training curriculum provided to council staff through gsLearn.
- Council communications that facilitate peer exchange and strategic best practices, such as council engagement teams that inform Movement strategies, monthly leadership calls and weekly council staff webinars, and online discussion forums with subject matter expert support.
- Data and analytics that enable councils to serve their members well, including monthly membership and customer service dashboards, access to market data such as school and consumer insights to enable strategic marketing, and analysis on market trends and opportunities.

GSUSA also provides fundraising support to councils, including educational webinars taught by experts in the field; toolkits containing resources and materials for council use in the areas of planned giving, alums, and lifetime membership; regular communications with council fund development staff via quarterly webinars; and graphics and messaging for use in micro-giving initiatives.

Finally, GSUSA protects the Girl Scouts' intellectual property and brand for the good of the Movement and our girls, including filing a complaint against the Boy Scouts of America for trademark infringement and misuse of Girl Scouts' intellectual property.

Can you explain the pension program/numbers in more detail?

There are currently 98 councils that are employers in the multiple employer CSEC pension plan. GSUSA works with the Pension Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from councils, the Finance Committee, and the National Board to improve the funded status of the

Plan. GSUSA realizes the burden that the pension contributions place on councils and is continuing to commit resources in seeking ways to improve the funding of the Plan.

The Plan has been frozen since July 31, 2010. As the fiduciary and sponsor of the Plan, GSUSA is obligated to ensure that all participants receive their earned benefits in the Plan. All beneficiary payments are being made as required.

On April 30, 2020, the most recent date for which information is available, Plan assets equaled \$435 million, and the Plan was 61% funded. Investment returns for the Plan were 20.4% over the three-year period versus a 20.1% benchmark. Councils are contributing approximately \$32 million on an annual basis to the Plan. As noted earlier, GSUSA is providing approximately \$1 million in relief annually to councils for pension expenses from the spend rate on the Movement Growth Fund.

In 2019, GSUSA held extensive Request for Proposal processes for an investment consultant and an actuary and benefits administrator firm, to select best in class advisors. NEPC, LLC of Boston, Massachusetts, was selected as the investment consultant, and Willis Towers Watson was selected as the actuary and benefits administrator. NEPC developed an asset allocation study to increase returns, while remaining within the risk tolerance of the Plan. Willis Towers Watson is working to identify opportunities to reduce the liabilities in the Plan.

Due to the work of the public policy office and councils, legislation was passed in December 2019 to reduce the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (“PBGC”) premiums paid by the Plan. The Plan received a \$3.5 million refund for 2019 and expects to save an average of \$4 million per year for the next five years. Lower expenses mean that more assets will remain in the Plan and grow with investment returns, thus increasing the funding of the Plan.

When will updated financial data be shared?

Our 2020 fiscal year ran from October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020. As such, the Stewardship Report, which we shared in early September, covered GSUSA’s financials for the three most recent complete fiscal years—2017, 2018, and 2019. As our fiscal year ends on September 30, we begin working each October to prepare our audited financial statements. After the board has reviewed and approved the statements, which usually takes place at their January meeting (the first meeting in the new fiscal year), we then share them on the [financial](#)

[section of our website](#) (for example, you can view the [2019 audited financial statement](#)), where we also share the IRS Form 990.

Is there a breakdown of where funds are going?

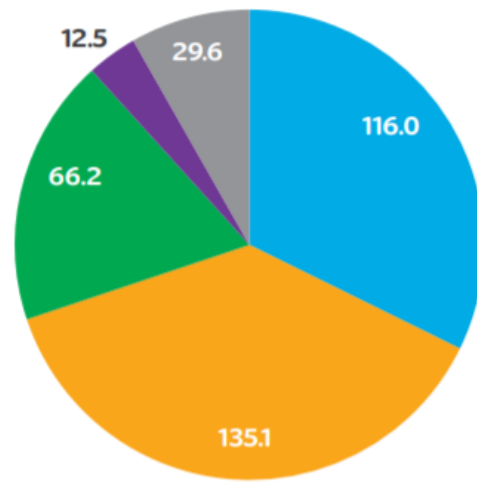
Yes, please see page 60 of the [Stewardship Report](#).

Operating Expenses

FY 2017-2019



FY 2017-2019 - \$359.5M



Why did GSUSA choose New York for their headquarters?

Juliette Gordon Low choose New York City for Girl Scouts’ national headquarters in 1916. You can read more about her decision and how we have continued to evolve our presence in New York City in this post on our blog, [“In a Girl Scout State of Mind.”](#)

What was the income associated with selling the Girl Scout name to other organizations?

GSUSA licenses to manufacturers and other vendors the right to use the organization’s name and service marks on their products. For the year ending September 30, 2019, we reported \$9,386,000 in royalties. GSUSA licenses its intellectual property to companies to generate revenue that is not tied to membership, raise awareness of our brand, improve consumer engagement, and amplify our reach through the licensees’ marketing investments. Revenue from the licensing program is accounted for within GSUSA’s national budget. Proceeds fund research, program, and technology innovation, which benefits Girl Scouts nationwide. In addition, licensees with retail presence often also support the Girl Scout Cookie Program by hosting cookie booths.

Each state government has an abandoned property dept of their Treasury Dept, and if you search Girl Scouts, there are abandoned funds on many states' listings. Could a procedure be invented to claim those funds?

Each state has different processes for unclaimed funds. We periodically remind councils to check their state's unclaimed funds sites for any Girl Scout funds that may be theirs as they will need to follow the requirements and process that each state has outlined.

For GSUSA, we check the New York state site on a periodic basis to ensure we reclaim any outstanding items.

Why did GSUSA drop the 80's rule to the 70's rule for retirement beginning with mergers in 2006?

The Rule of 80 is still in place. If you were an employee of a Girl Scout council whose council participated in realignment and you termed or retired under the Voluntary Employee Retirement Incentive Program (or VERIP) that councils could opt to offer during realignment, you were given five years of service and five years in age effectively making it the rule of 70. But only this population would be the recipients of the this "rule of 70," everyone else is still under rule of 80.

Is the revenue growth from dues increasing from \$15 to \$25?

Operating revenues for the past three years totaled \$354.4 million. The increase of \$10 in membership dues to address important program design, council support, and technology needs resulted in higher membership revenues of \$24.8 million in financial year 2018 and \$24.2 million in financial year 2019. Other revenues consist of Girl Scout merchandise sales, royalties, and higher contributed income.

TECHNOLOGY

What is the status of the Customer Engagement Initiative (CEI)?

Our Customer Engagement Initiative (CEI) continues to align our Movement membership data through our cloud-based common operating platform. By 2018, we had successfully migrated 99% of our membership onto the common operating platform. It was a truly significant digital moment for our Movement as it enabled a data revolution and greater and nimbler customer service. It also allowed us to institute modern business practices, including national digital

marketing initiatives, sophisticated data analytics and visualization, and multichannel customer service, and created the foundation for a technology ecosystem of connected digital experiences like online learning and tracking a girl's Gold Award.

The continued evolution of CEI, including Volunteer Systems 2.0, gsEvents, and an upgraded VTK, allows us to build a stable and scalable foundation for future technology investments, while improving the customer experience. We continue to implement key improvements for new members and councils, including easier online troop start-up, and a wider listing of opportunities and events.

We are currently evaluating improvements to our customer experience, such as a single sign-on and digital resumes that track Girl Scouts' achievements, as well as a Movement-wide ecommerce solution and an application programming interface (API) hub. We are continuing the best practice of training and deployment, and also improving ways of working by providing online, on-demand training for council staff and volunteers via the new gsLearn tool.

Through CEI, Girl Scouts is transforming the way we serve our members, adopting new, Movement-wide technology to build our capacity to deliver on our mission and improve the overall girl and volunteer experiences. CEI also plays a critical role in helping us reach our short-term goal of stemming membership decline, especially in the K–5 demographic that is so key to the health of our organization.

Is there a plan to continue with the mobile app development?

GSUSA's work on the mobile app has not yet resulted in a usable app. We did design and implement a proof of concept, including a small pilot. Technology investments are inherently risky and sometimes include development work that is not all useable.

However, our other applications are web enabled. As we refine our mobile integration strategy, we continue to rethink and revisit how the mobile app concept will compliment and integrate with the rest of the GSUSA application portfolio (and architecture). This is what is giving rise to a pause in development, as we make sure we come out of the mobile integration strategy work with a clearer vision for the product.