



# The Girl Scout Alum Difference:

A Lifetime of Courage,  
Confidence, and Character

---

2021 Report by the Girl Scout Research Institute



# 2021 Girl Scout Alum Facts

## Alums at a Glance<sup>1</sup>

- More than one in three women in the United States were Girl Scouts at some point in their lives.
- There are currently more than 50 million Girl Scout alums.
- Girl Scout alums say they have Girl Scouting to thank for many of their life achievements. Girl Scouts:
  - Set them on a path for achievement and success
  - Connected them to a network of girls and women around the world
  - Developed their passions and interests in the outdoors; business and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).
- Nearly nine in ten Girl Scout alums (88%) are satisfied with their lives today, and 87% say they have successfully met their life goals.
- Girl Scout alums are civically engaged—86% are registered to vote and 73% vote always or nearly always.

## Girl Scout Alums Lead<sup>2</sup>

- Fifty-six percent (56%) of women in the 117th Congress are Girl Scout alums.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of current female senators are Girl Scout alums.
- Fifty-three percent (53%) of current female delegates and representatives in the House of Representatives are Girl Scout alums.
- Five of the nine current female governors are Girl Scout alums.
- Every female secretary of state in U.S. history is a Girl Scout or Girl Guide alum: Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton.

## Benefits of Girl Scouting<sup>3</sup>

- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of alums assert that Girl Scouts has had a positive impact on their lives.
- Alums who were in Girl Scouts for two or more years showed a significant increase in beneficial life outcomes.
- The longer alums were engaged in Girl Scouts, the more likely they are to be successful and satisfied with their lives. This is even more pronounced if they earned highest awards, especially the Gold Award.
- Compared to other women, Girl Scout alums embody higher levels of:
  - **Courage**—they show resilience when learning from failure and setbacks, take on challenges, are ambitious, and aren't afraid to take risks (46% compared to 36%).
  - **Confidence**—they accomplish what they set out to do and are assured in their abilities (66% compared to 53%).
  - **Character**—they lead purposeful and meaningful lives, are honest and trustworthy, stand up for their beliefs and values, and actively contribute to others' well-being (74% compared to 62% showed positive values and 61% compared to 48% showed positive self-image).
- Alums say they “bring people together to get things done,” and 84% hold leadership roles as adults.
- Alums attain higher levels of education than other women (78% compared to 65% attended at least some college)
- Alums are more satisfied with their careers than other women (68% compared to 60%) and slightly more likely to be in management positions at work (42% compared to 37%).
- Alums are more likely than other women to volunteer (48% compared to 33%) and contribute financially to causes they care about (62% compared to 47%).

<sup>1</sup> The Girl Scout Alum Difference (2021).

<sup>2</sup> Girl Scouts of the USA's Public Policy & Advocacy Office (February 2021).

<sup>3</sup> The Girl Scout Alum Difference (2021).



## The Impact of the Girl Scout Gold Award<sup>4</sup>

A recent study found that although being a Girl Scout is linked to improved life outcomes, earning the Girl Scout Gold Award has even greater benefits:

- Gold Award Girl Scouts describe themselves as “go-getters” and report that while earning the Gold Award, they developed essential 21st century employment skills that give them a boost in their academic and professional lives.
- The Gold Award opens doors! Alums who have earned it say it gives them a competitive advantage on college (86%) and scholarship (76%) applications and résumés (82%), helping them get into college or a graduate program, earn a scholarship, or get a job.
- Gold Award Girl Scouts are more likely than non-alums to have obtained an undergraduate or graduate degree (88% compared to 32%).
- Gold Award Girl Scouts are almost three times more likely than non-alums to volunteer for causes they care about (82% compared to 33%).
- Gold Award Girl Scouts are lifelong leaders who put their beliefs about women in leadership into action. Nearly all Gold Award Girl Scouts (99%) hold leadership roles in their everyday lives—such as at school, in their careers, or through volunteer work—and seven in ten hold three or more leadership roles.
- More than eight in ten Gold Award Girl Scouts feel satisfied with their lives and achievements.
- Girl Scout alums and other women who know about the Gold Award see it as important and associate those who earn it with leadership, decision making, teamwork/collaboration, and project management skills.

---

## Read More

- [The Girl Scout Alum Difference: A Lifetime of Courage, Confidence, and Character \(2021\)](#)
- [Girl Scouting Works: The Alumnae Impact Study \(2012\)](#)
- [The Power of the Girl Scout Gold Award: Excellence in Leadership and Life \(2016\)](#)

The Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) is the applied research arm of Girl Scouts of the USA. Through original research studies, the GSRI measures the impact of Girl Scouting and leads national conversations about girls’ healthy development, well-being, and leadership. Learn more at [www.girlscouts.org/research](http://www.girlscouts.org/research).

© 2021 Girl Scouts of the USA

---

<sup>4</sup> *The Girl Scout Alum Difference* (2021).