

**WOMEN WHO PAVED  
THE WAY**



**GSCI**

# Patch Curriculum

## Preface

From the earliest days of the country, American women paved a way forward, overcoming many obstacles in their path. Women, in big and small ways, have taken on the challenges society placed in front of them. Women of the past were limited in their opportunities. They could not obtain an education, they could not manage their own finances and property, and they could not participate in the American government. Women of color not only faced discrimination as women, but also because of race.

American women were first admitted to institutions of higher learning in the 1840s. They fought against slavery. Women also sought the right to vote. Beginning in the 1850s and continuing to the early 1910s, women advocated for suffrage. It was not until 1920 with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that women were allowed to vote. Even with the ballot, women continued to push for equality in all areas of life. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 outlawing wage discrimination based on sex and Title IX in 1972 preventing discrimination based on sex in educational programs, moved women's equality forward.

Women on the local, state, and national levels have contributed to organizations like Girl Scouts, creating opportunities not only for themselves but also for women and girls after them. Women expanded their roles as CEOs, astronauts, government officials, doctors, athletes, and community advocates. Participation in this patch will help you learn how women paved the way in Girl Scouts, in Indiana, and the United States.

## Steps

1. Courage in Girl Scouts
2. Hoosier heroes
3. Local leadership
4. National change
5. Your legacy

## Purpose

When I've earned this patch, will know about women in our history who have paved the way.



# Step 1: Courage in Girl Scouts

Juliette Gordon Low's mission when starting Girl Scouts of America was stated as building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Her vision still stands today. Girl Scouts offers girls plenty of practice for leadership, adventure, and success in a variety of ways. The importance of being a girl-led organization and Juliette's courageous heart encourages members, leaders, and parents to continue to support her vision. Check out the list below of Girl Scouts' contributions throughout history.



## 1910s

In the midst of the Progressive Era as the nation was expanding by adding the states of New Mexico and Arizona, but before women had the right to vote, Juliette Gordon Low founded Girl Scouts in 1912, with an emphasis on inclusiveness, the outdoors, self-reliance, and service. World War I (1914-1918) provided many Girl Scouts with the opportunity for service to their communities and the country. For many communities in Central Indiana, war-related service led to the first Girl Scout troops being organized so the girls could help.

## 1920s

Girl Scouting continued to expand its reach to more and more girls, with the first Girl Scout troops launching outside the United States in China, Syria, and Mexico. Additionally, one of the earliest Native American Girl Scout troops formed on the Onondaga Reservation in New York State in 1921. Mexican American girls formed a Girl Scout troop in Houston, Texas, in 1922. Lone Troops on Foreign Soil (later called USA Girl Scouts Overseas) registered its first Girl Scout troop in Shanghai, China, with 18 girls in 1925. Girl Scouts also formed troops for girls with special needs.

## 1930s

With the United States consumed by the Great Depression, Girl Scouts participated in relief efforts by collecting clothing and food for those in need. As the country continued to deal with the waves of immigration from the previous decade, Girl Scouts began printing its “Who Are the Girl Scouts?” promotional booklet in Yiddish, Italian, and Polish.

## 1940s

During World War II, Girl Scouts interested in flying participated in the Wing Scouts program, often led by early women pilots. Girl Scout troops also operated bicycle courier services, ran farm aid projects, collected fat and scrap metal, and grew victory gardens, as well as sponsored defense institutes that taught women survival skills and techniques for comforting children during air raids. Japanese-American girls, restricted to internment camps in Utah and California, also established troops.

## 1950s

Girl Scouts responded to the Korean War by assembling “Kits for Korea” which were pouches of items needed by Korean citizens. Girl Scouts also continued to press issues of inclusiveness and equality, with Ebony magazine reporting in 1952 that even in the south, “. . . Scouts were making slow and steady progress toward surmounting the racial barriers of the region.” Girl Scouts also fostered world understanding, seeking ways to provide opportunities to prevent earlier conflicts.

## 1960s

During this tumultuous and vibrant decade, Girl Scouts held “Speak Out” conferences around the country to lend their voices to the fight for racial equality, launched the “ACTION 70” project to help overcome prejudice and build better relationships between people, and viewed the Apollo 12 moon landing at Cape Kennedy, Florida, as guests of NASA.

## 1970s

During this period, Girl Scouts elected its first African-American national board president, Gloria D. Scott. She stood up for environmental issues by launching the national “Eco-Action” program; and helped Vietnamese refugee children adapt to their new homes in America.



## 1980s

Girl Scouts established the Daisy level for kindergarten-aged girls as interest in Girl Scouting expanded. They also distributed “The Contemporary Issues” series addressing some of the most serious issues teen girls of the day were confronting, including drug use, child abuse, and teen pregnancy.

## 1990s

Amid the explosive growth of personal computers, Girl Scouts introduced the technology badge for Girl Scout Juniors, while also tackling illiteracy with the Right to Read service project, which nearly four million Girl Scouts and leaders participated in.

## 2000s

Girl Scouts entered the first decade of the new millennium focused on the healthy development of girls. They established the Girl Scout Research Institute to conduct studies and report findings. They also continued to emphasize inclusiveness by hosting a National Conference on Latinas in Girl Scouting and, in 2005, elected the first Hispanic woman as chair of the National Board, Patricia Diaz Dennis.

## Today

Even as technology plays a larger and larger role in Americans’ lives, Girl Scouts also stay connected to nature and the great outdoors. While Girl Scouts introduced new badges to promote outdoor activities, we’ve also partnered with Google for “Made with Code,” a program encouraging girls to get an early start in computer science. In 2014,

Girl Scouts launched Digital Cookie, through which Girl Scout Cookies were sold online by girls for the first time in the history of the iconic cookie program.

My purpose...  
to go on with my  
heart and soul,  
devoting all my  
energies to  
Girl Scouts, and  
heart and hand  
with them, we  
will make our  
lives and the  
lives of the future  
girls happy.

- Juliette Gordon Low

# Actions: Do One of the Following

## Confidence in your culture.

One thing that is special about Girl Scouts is that we all come from different cultures, backgrounds, and families. To share with your troop the amazing culture and traditions in your life, encourage each girl to collect pictures of traditions and cultural things their family does. The different pictures show the differences between family traditions and cultures. Discuss with your troop the importance of celebrating different cultures.

## Girl Scout goals.

Martha Selma Beck was the first African American troop leader. She started the first African-American troop at a segregated Indianapolis school in 1921. Martha showed others that a troop with African-American girls was possible, as well as deserved. Share with your troop a goal like Martha had. How can you achieve it?

## Courage, confidence, character.

These are the three goals Girl Scouts is founded on. Look at the list below of the definitions of each. Discuss with your troop why these three traits are important for women paving the way. What other traits are important? What traits do you have that make you a leader?

**Courage:** When someone is courageous, it means they are brave. This bravery doesn't mean the absence of fear but continuing through it. Examples of bravery may include being kind, loving yourself and everyone around you, serving others, and sticking up for yourself and others when they are getting down.

**Confidence:** When someone is confident, it means they are proud of who they are and what they can do. Confidence is also loving yourself and sharing your creations with everyone around you.

**Character:** Having character means you do the right thing and you are staying true to yourself no matter what. It is having strength through adversity.

## Step 2: Hoosier Heros

Indiana's history is full of women who have paved the way. A perfect example is Lucinda Burbank Morton, who was the wife of Oliver P. Morton, the 14th Governor of Indiana. Lucinda served an influential role in the Midwest abolition movement and relief efforts for the American Civil War, especially in her work with the Ladies Patriotic Association (LPA). The LPA consisted of Hoosier women of political and/or social prominence. The organization served as one of Lucinda's first major philanthropic endeavors. To learn more about Hoosier women who made a difference, do one of these three activities.

### Letters to leadership.

Julia Carson was the first African American woman to represent the Indiana state capital and focused on common issues that affected working-class Americans. Julia overcame poverty and racism, and she made a choice to work hard, have compassion, and give a pleasing sense of humor to all she interacted with. She is remembered for being someone who did the people's work and fought for those who didn't have a voice. Write a letter to your representative or legislator advocating for an issue you're passionate about. Have your troop leader assist you in sending the letter and share if you get a response back!



### Indiana suffragettes.

Depending on your access to technology, this activity can be done in groups or individually. Research a women's movement suffragette or an activist from Indiana's history. Find out facts about her, what she did, and where she came from. Write a short biography about her and share with your troop. You can also find out about women in your community by reaching out to your local history museum or public library.

**Tip:** Try researching someone like May Wright Sewall who advocated for more rights for women; she wrote several books, including "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Indiana."

## Photo fun.

Gene Stratton-Porter (born 1863) was a famous author, naturalist, and photographer from Indiana. She was a strong advocate for wetland protection and even designed and built a wetland after the swamp near her home was drained by using her own money from her books she sold. Indiana is full of canals, lakes, and rivers. With your troop, take a field trip to one of these water resources. Take a page from Gene's book, and as you walk along the canal or lake, take photos of the beautiful natural wetlands. Share your photos with your troop.

**Tip:** This can be done with partners or individually. For added fun make it a photo scavenger hunt.





## Step 3: Local Leadership

Making a difference starts in your own community. Women leaders all over the world first start making a difference by making a change to the problems they see every day. In Indiana as of 2023, women hold only 26.7% of the seats in the state legislature, and it's estimated women in Indiana will not see equal pay until the year 2086. To learn how you can work to change issues effecting your community, choose one of the activities below.

### **Issue speech.**

Is there a local issue you're passionate about and want to see change? Research or talk to people about the needs of your community (schools, animal shelters, or parks). After you find an issue you're passionate about, present a brief speech or presentation to your troop. Ask yourselves these questions, Why are you passionate about this issue? What do you want to see change? What are some ways you can make that change happen?

### **Protest posters.**

A voice is one of the most powerful tools we have as a woman leader. Think of an issue that is important to you; it can be political or not, it can be one that is already being protested, or it can be an issue you feel has been overlooked. Create a protest poster to show your community what issue you're passionate about.

**Tip:** For added fun, you can hang your posters in school, but make sure you ask the administration for permission first.

### **Impact Videos.**

Put together a video showcasing two different places in your local community where women have left a lasting impact. This could be a woman involved with politics, community projects, or anything that has left a physical trace behind. Take the viewer on a virtual tour of the chosen places as well as provide information highlighting the different womens' successes. This activity will help you as well as the public see a tangible example of how impactful and powerful women's contributions to society can be. With the help of a parent, share your video on a social network for the community to view!

## Step 4: National Change

Now that you have learned about women who have made a change in your own community, in Girl Scouts, and in Indiana, we can learn about women all over the U.S. who have made a difference. To learn more about women in our national history that have paved a way check out the list below.

### **Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)**

Anthony played a pivotal role in the women's suffrage movement. In 1878, she and co-workers presented an amendment to Congress that would give women the right to vote. In 1920, Sen. Aaron A. Sargent, R-Calif., introduced the bill and it was ratified as the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.

### **Clara Barton (1821-1912)**

Barton founded the American Red Cross and served as its first president. She was a nurse during the Civil War for the Union Army.

### **Amelia Earhart (1897-1939)**

Earhart was the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean and she received the U.S. Distinguished Flying Cross for her accomplishments. Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, disappeared in 1937 over the central Pacific Ocean while attempting to fly around the globe.

### **Marguerite Higgins (1920-1966)**

Higgins was a reporter and war correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. She advanced the

cause of equal opportunity for female war correspondents and was the first woman awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Foreign Correspondence in 1951.

### **Grace Hopper (1906-1992)**

A computer scientist and Navy rear admiral, Hopper played an integral role in creating programs for some of the world's first computers.

### **Barbara Jordan (1936-1996)**

Jordan was a lawyer, educator, politician, and civil rights movement leader. She was the first southern African American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and the first African-American woman to give a keynote address at the Democratic National Convention.

### **Coretta Scott King (1927-2006)**

The wife, and later widow, of Martin Luther King Jr. played an important role in preserving the legacy of the civil rights leader. Following his assassination in 1968, she founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. She later lobbied for her late husband's birthday to be recognized as a federal holiday.

## **Clare Boothe Luce (1903-1987)**

Luce was an author, conservative politician, and U.S. ambassador to Italy and Brazil. She was the first woman appointed to an ambassadorial role abroad. Luce served in the House of Representatives from 1943-1974.

## **Sandra Day O'Connor (1930-present)**

A lawyer, O'Connor became a celebrated judge and eventually the first female justice on the Supreme Court, serving from 1981-2006.

## **Rosa Parks (1913-2005)**

Parks was the most prominent female face of the civil rights movement. In December 1955, Parks refused to give up her seat in the “colored section” of a bus to a white man and was charged with civil disobedience. She is known as “the mother of the freedom movement.”

## **Sally Ride (1951-2012)**

A physicist and astronaut, Ride joined NASA in 1978. Five years later, in 1983, she became the first American woman to go to outer space.

## **Sacagawea (1788-1812)**

Sacagawea was a Lemhi Shoshone woman best known for her expedition with Lewis and Clark through the territory of the Louisiana Purchase. The Native American traveled from North Dakota to the Pacific Ocean with the explorers.

## **Muriel F. Siebert (1928-2013)**

Known as “the first woman of finance,” Siebert was the first woman to head a firm traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

## **Margaret Chase Smith (1897-1995)**

A Republican politician, Smith served in the House of Representatives from 1940-1949 and the Senate from 1949-1973. She was the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress.

## **Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896)**

The abolitionist and author’s most well-known work is the novel “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” which portrayed the impact of slavery on families and children. Its impact led to Stowe’s meeting with President Abraham Lincoln.

## **Sojourner Truth (1797-1883)**

An abolitionist and women’s rights activist, Truth was born into slavery and escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. She became best known for her “Ain’t I a Woman?” speech on racial inequalities in 1851 at the Ohio Women’s Rights Convention.

## **Harriet Tubman (1820-1913)**

Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849 and became a famous “conductor” of the Underground Railroad. Tubman risked her life to lead hundreds of slaves to freedom using that secret network of safe houses.

## **Ruth Bader Ginsberg (1933-2020)**

One of the original pioneers of female empowerment who broke down and completely redefined what society typically expects of women. When studying at Harvard law school in 1957, she was one of just nine female undergraduates in a year with a group of 500 men and suffered countless indignities. She used this as motivation to show the world what women were really capable of, which would eventually result in her becoming one of the only women to ever ascend to the U.S. Supreme Court.

## **Michelle Obama (1964-present)**

A lawyer and author who was the first lady of the United States from 2009 to 2017. She is married to the 44th President of the United States Barack Obama. She is the first African American First Lady of the United States. She continues to use her platform for the betterment of education and health.

## **Ellen DeGeneres (1958-present)**

A comedian, television host, actress, writer, and producer. She has been a pioneer in the fight for LGBTQ equal rights and visibility. She was one of the first openly gay characters and celebrities on television.

## **Ellen Ochoa (1958-present)**

Ochoa was the first Latina to be selected by NASA to be an astronaut in 1990. She attended San Diego State and then received her masters in science and a doctorate in electrical engineering. Ochoa participated in four space flights and served as the first

Hispanic and second female director of NASA's Johnson Space Center. She currently is Vice Chair of the National Science Board.

## **Patsy Mink (1927-2002)**

Born in Hawaii, Mink wanted to become a doctor but was rejected by 12 medical schools so she turned to the law. She was initially refused the right to take the bar examination but she challenged it and was able to take it and passed. She served in the Hawaii state legislature and then later was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1964, becoming the first woman of color and first Asian American woman elected to Congress. She supported early child education and co-authored Title IX.



Take another look at the list of women who have paved the way. Now choose a woman and research more about them. Create a costume that resembles them and choose one issue you and the woman leader have in common. Present the issue and your costume to your troop. For added fun, have the troop guess your costume and issue.

To learn more about ways you can make a greater impact do one of the activities below.

## Debate time.

Ruth Bader Ginsberg was an Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. She was the second female justice of four to be confirmed to the court. She is famous for her strength and dissenting opinions. Write down an opinion on a piece of paper and put it in a bag to be mixed up. Stand in front of the troop with another girl. Each of you will pull out a piece of paper. Now, each of you will try and debate the issue you pulled. For added fun, have your troop vote on what side of the issue they are on.

**Example debates:** cats are better than dogs, a hot dog is a sandwich, pizza is the best food.

## Impact of you.

Discuss with your troop how you can make a change. What kind of impact do you want to have on the world? What is something you want to be known for? Now make a plan with your troop on what you can do to make an impact.

**Tip:** This could be a time to brainstorm for your Bronze, Silver, or Gold award or be a more day-to-day plan for change.



## Step 5: Your Legacy

Every Girl Scout has the power to make a change. Now that you've learned about the women who have paved the way for you, it's time to think about how you will pave the way for others. We all have special skills and talents that make us unique. To learn how to make a difference with the skills you have, do one of the activities listed.

### **Important interview.**

Find an influential woman in your life to interview. Through this interview, you will discover and learn the struggles this person has gone through as a woman and how they overcame it. You will then pick two characteristics that you admire most about the person and note how you could implement them in your own life. Share with your troop!

### **Letter for you.**

Write a letter to your future or past self, stating ways you are or could be more honest, courageous, and kind. If you are writing the letter to your younger self, give advice on how to gain these qualities. If you're writing to your future self, write hopes for what you would like to do. Put your letter in a safe place to read if you need to remember how to be your most honest, courageous, and kind self.

### **Agree or disagree.**

It's important to think of the things you stand for in order to change the things you don't. Each girl will be given a sheet of paper that has agree or disagree questions (found below) focusing on their own beliefs. Now choose a peaceful place to answer these vulnerable questions. This activity does not require you to share with your troop, but you can if everyone feels comfortable.

**Tip:** Troop leaders can add or take away any statements they feel work best for their troop.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Agree/ Disagree</b>
Students should not be required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in school.	
Public schools should require all students to wear uniforms.	
Parents should carefully monitor how their children use the internet.	
Video games make teens violent.	
Most young people do not respect adults.	
Most adults do not respect teenagers.	
Rap music makes teens violent.	
Prejudiced people cannot be changed.	
Jokes that focus on ethnicity, race, or sexual orientation reinforce prejudice.	
The media unfairly portrays certain groups of people.	
There is too much focus on diversity and multiculturalism in the school curriculum.	
People who the government suspects of being dangerous to the United States should be carefully watched and their activities monitored.	
Anyone who wants to come to the United States should be allowed to enter.	
Since the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks, the world is no longer safe anywhere.	
Bullying is a normal part of adolescent behavior.	
School violence is a major problem in this country.	

# Conclusion

Now that I have completed this program, I:

- Know about women you have paved the way in Indiana and the U.S.
- Am aware of issues impacting my community and how I can change them.
- Can use my voice to create positive change and pave the way for others.

The work of today is the history of tomorrow, and we are its makers.

- Juliette Gordon Low



# Congrats on completing the Women Who Paved the Way patch curriculum!

Patches are available at the Girl Scout Shop.

