

# MAKING a DIFFERENCE

FOR FRIENDS OF GIRL SCOUTS SAN DIEGO • WINTER 2020



Girl Scout  
Outreach: 40  
Years of Fostering  
Confidence,  
Building Leaders  
in Low-resource  
Neighborhoods

Italia, a shy, nine-year-old girl, was feeling isolated and bored during the shutdown, longing for an interesting activity. →



p. 3  
**GIRL SCOUT STRONG**  
2021: Reflecting on a year of great challenge...and opportunity



p. 4  
**NEUROSCIENTIST SEES  
POWER OF GIRL SCOUTING  
IN DAUGHTER**  
Roshni Kakiya inspired estate gift

# Elisa, Italia Among 100,000 Girl Scout Outreach Alums

Her mother, Luz, heard about our Girl Scout Outreach (GSO) program from a friend and registered Italia for a session.

Italia soon received a backpack filled with enticing materials, including binoculars to decorate and use for birdwatching. She loved interacting with other fourth-graders and our Outreach staff, doing hands-on activities as they explored topics like nature, art, cyber safety, and cultural diversity.

Luz—who is currently working full-time from home—greatly appreciated the staff-led programming. And she was thrilled to see Italia almost immediately “come out of her shell.” According to our staff, at Outreach, Italia became a lively, curious girl who frequently volunteered to help and asked and answered questions.

The four-week Outreach program was Italia’s very first experience with Girl Scouts, and she can’t wait for more. Virtual Girl Scout sessions are “way different from school!” she says.

Money Matters was her favorite unit. “I had to invent a company and come up with a business plan. I made my company about collecting recyclables, so I could help the earth, plus raise money!”

Italia’s story mirrors that of another little girl who was in Outreach more than two decades ago.

Elisa Hilliard discovered Girl Scouting in 1988, during a lunchtime “In-School Girl Scouting” session (as GSO was called then) at Beyer Elementary in San Ysidro. She remembers that, “On meeting days, I went to school excited, knowing I would have fun at Girl Scouts. There, I felt special and included.”

“I had been living in the U.S. for just two years, so Outreach introduced me to an American tradition I’d known nothing about. Being a Girl Scout inspired me to learn more about other wonderful opportunities I could have in this country.”

Today, Elisa delivers the power of Girl Scouting to her daughters Ashley, Natalie, and Lauren (pictured, left) and other members of her multi-level Troop 6139. This active volunteer also co-manages Chula Vista’s Sunny Trails Service Unit with Marilu Thomas.

Elisa holds a master’s degree in curriculum and teaching. As onboarding manager of Dimensions Collaborative School, a K-12



*A recent virtual GSO program meeting via ZOOM*

independent study school for self-directed learners, she says, “I also apply Girl Scouts’ highly effective, girl-led operating model in my professional life.”

Elisa and Italia are among the 100,000 women and girls who have benefited from the Girl Scout Outreach program since its inception 40 years ago. Now delivering GSO programs via digital platforms, the Outreach’s team’s dedication to our mission is as strong as ever. Last membership year, they served more than 3,300 girls who attend 76 local schools.

These professionally trained, bilingual program leaders collaborate with community partners, college interns, and other volunteers to host events and camps focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), outdoors, life skills, leadership development, anti-bullying, and health and wellness.

To learn more about Girl Scout Outreach and why Girl Scouts is the #BestPlace4Girls, visit [sdgirlscouts.org/outreach](https://sdgirlscouts.org/outreach).



*GSO alum Elisa Hilliard is pictured with daughters Natalie, Lauren, and Ashley.*

## CEO UPDATE

*Carol Dedrich, CEO*

### Girl Scout Strong!

Happy holidays! At this time of year, I am reflecting on how Girl Scouts San Diego has made a profound difference in our community and with our girls during these challenging months.



Community service and leadership development are cornerstones of Girl Scouts, and I am very proud of how our girls are responding throughout these uncertain, challenging times. At the start of the pandemic, girls swiftly took action by sewing masks, writing letters of support to seniors, and cheering on essential workers.

They didn't stop there! They transitioned their troop meetings to virtual platforms and found creative ways to earn badges in everything from cooking (via #nailedit home challenges) to cyber security and coding.

As we celebrated the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment to the constitution, many girls learned about women's right to vote and earned civics badges.

We have all experienced setbacks this year, and Girl Scouts San Diego is no exception. Our volunteers and staff pivoted to provide interactive programs and support the girls' ongoing development. From Camp Reimagined to virtual Gold Award Girl Scouts and Cool Women celebrations, our Girl Scout family came together to keep girls in quarantine connected to their friends and community. These connections are helping girls overcome their fears and build their courage, confidence, and character.

Girl Scouts need your commitment and support. More than 45% of members live in low-income households. With your support, you ensure Girl Scouts is available for all girls, regardless of their families' ability to pay.

In a time when loneliness, isolation, and stress are taking a toll on children, we provide a safe space to keep connected, share fears, build resilience, celebrate accomplishments, and feel a true sense of purpose. We are Girl Scout strong and will get through this together!

All the best wishes to you and yours for a happy and healthy holiday season.

## Tips for Year-End Giving

These tax relief tips may be helpful as you finalize your 2020 charitable giving.

- If you itemize deductions, you can deduct donations that equal up to 100% of your 2020 Adjusted Gross Income (AGI).
- If you make contributions to qualified charities, like Girl Scouts San Diego, and do not itemize deductions, you qualify for a charitable deduction of up to \$300 per taxpayer (\$600 for a married couple).
- If you are over 70½, you can avoid taxable income by directing up to \$100,000 from your IRA to Girl Scouts through a qualified charitable distribution (QCD).
- If you contribute appreciated securities held for more than one year, you can receive a current income tax deduction and avoid capital gains tax.

### You Need a Will!

Many of us put off creating a will, even though this important document can:

- Provide for your family after your death
- Distribute your assets according to your wishes
- Save on estate taxes, when properly planned
- Allow you to leave a gift to Girl Scouts—free of estate tax—without giving up assets today

As a friend of Girl Scouts San Diego, you can get a legal, valid, and customized will for free!

For information on how you can create your legacy, please visit [TrustandWill.com/girl-scouts](http://TrustandWill.com/girl-scouts).

## 'Tis the Season!

Reach into your heart so no girl feels left out!

Please give generously to Girl Scouts San Diego so every girl in our community can experience the life-changing benefits of Girl Scouting...regardless of her family's ability to pay. Together, let's build a bright future for girls!



For additional details, please contact your financial advisor. For guidance about making a gift to Girl Scouts, please contact Gift Planning Officer Merle Brodie at 858-243-1896 or [mbrodie@sdgirlscouts.org](mailto:mbrodie@sdgirlscouts.org).

<<Addressee>>  
<<Address Line 1>>  
<<Address Line 2>>  
<<City>>, <<State>> <<ZIP>>

## MAKING a DIFFERENCE

### Dr. Divya Kakaiya: Girl Scouting Instills Kindness, Empathy

“Smartphones are desensitizing our girls,” according to licensed clinical psychologist and neuroscientist Dr. Divya Kakaiya. The remedy, she says, is Girl Scouts.

“While teenagers tend to be very self-absorbed by nature, they are also altruistic. Girl Scouting teaches girls to have compassion and empathy for the community.”

A nationally renowned speaker, Divya founded the Healthy Within center, where she equips teens and families to “rewire” their brains—in part by “detoxing” from mobile devices and social media.

She has facilitated discussions for Girl Scouts for more than 12 years. During the pandemic, she is donating her services to provide weekly brain health sessions with our staff.

Divya also makes the world a better place by staying active in the San Diego Rotary service club and spearheading initiatives to fight sex trafficking. Her honors include being

named a Diversity Hero by KPBS and a Cool Woman of 2009 by Girl Scouts San Diego.

Divya began her Girl Scout affiliation as a Girl Guide in Kenya. The lifetime member currently serves on the Girl Scouts San Diego Board of Directors and often presents at our Volunteer Conferences. She recently rallied her circle of contacts to collectively donate nearly \$9,500 for our Power Her Promise campaign.

Divya sees the value of our mission in her own daughter. “Roshni is a living, breathing example of how Girl Scouting builds confident, caring, strong young women!”

Dr. Roshni Kakaiya, a 29-year-old physician at Scripps Mercy Hospital Chula Vista, has a passion for community medicine and mentoring youth.

Divya identifies troop leader Deb Winters as a highly influential person in Roshni’s life. “Deb cultivated empathy and a love for community within Roshni and all her girls...and



that is the most important thing.” Deb encouraged Roshni to earn the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards; explore STEM careers; and appreciate the outdoors. Roshni enjoyed challenging hikes with her troop and, as a 13-year-old, summited Mt. Kilimanjaro with her dad.

Seeing how the power of Girl Scouting shaped her daughter inspired Divya to continue to support our council’s work long after Roshni left for college. Divya recently allocated a portion of her estate to Girl Scouts San Diego, thereby qualifying for membership in our Juliette Gordon Low Society.

To learn more about your own planned giving opportunities, visit [sdgirlscouts.org/give](http://sdgirlscouts.org/give).