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## Suffolk hosts Girl Scouts for Day Of Inspiration & Learning

October 14, 2022 - Front Section



The Girl Scouts designed and built structures that could support the weight of at least one book – using only popsicle sticks and clothespins.

Boston, MA Suffolk hosted 22 Girl Scouts from Camp Cedar Hill in Waltham for a day of learning about the fascinating world of construction and the importance of female representation in the industry. The visit was part of Suffolk's Rebuild the Ratio Partnership with Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts. Rebuild the Ratio is an initiative launched last year with a pledge by Suffolk to increase the percentage of women employed by the company by 10 percentage points over 10 years, a dramatic increase that will provide more jobs for women and boost the percentage of women employees to nearly 40%.

With females representing only 9.9% of building industry workers, Suffolk's addressing this inequity at its roots by moving industry culture away from a lack of mentorship and stereotypes discouraging young women from entering Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Industry studies show that 74% of teen girls said they were interested in STEM, with 81% considering a career in a specific STEM field. But only 13% of these young women will pursue that career. Suffolk's Rebuild the Ratio initiative seeks to change that culture by providing mentorship and accentuating representation of women in construction in a positive way, while exposing girls to construction and STEM fields at a young age in hopes of fostering curiosity and inspiration.

The Girl Scouts who visited Suffolk's Boston headquarters were treated to a day of learning and inspiration, much of it provided by women already thriving at Suffolk. Following an introduction to Suffolk and its projects, the girls toured headquarters, engaged in a question-and-answer session with Suffolk female leaders, participated in enlightening CoLab and STEM activities, and received a jobsite tour of Suffolk's Northeastern University EXP project. This high-profile project is led by a female project executive and the project team is nearly 50% female. The goal of the day was to show these young girls, all in grades 6-8, that they are capable, valued, and incredibly important to the future of the construction industry.

Through a 10-year partnership with Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, Suffolk is contributing to the development of a Construction 101 Curriculum, customized for girls 5-17 years of age. This will bring STEM career exploration to thousands of girls across the country, ultimately inspiring more young women interested in construction-related STEM careers, as they hold the potential to bridge the gender equality gap. Suffolk and Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts pledge to bring 10% of all Girl Scouts in eastern Massachusetts through the curriculum during the next 10 years.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540