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Girl Scouts of Eastern Mass., in partnership with Suffolk, launch STEM-based “Cadettes Who Build” curriculum and patch program

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Waltham, MA Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts (GSEMA) revealed its newest STEM curriculum in partnership with Suffolk, one of the largest and most innovative construction and real estate enterprises in the country. “Cadettes Who Build,” an expansion to the previously launched “Juniors Who Build” and “Brownies Who Build” curricula, introduces Girl Scouts ages 11-14 to construction careers while teaching them the fundamentals of building processes through hands-on experiences.

The organizations kicked off the “Cadettes Who Build” curriculum with an event at Suffolk, where troops received a tour of Suffolk’s Boston headquarters, engaged in a hands-on STEM activity, and participated in a career panel with some of Suffolk’s women leaders.

The rapid advancement of technology and AI is transforming businesses, making science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education critical to successfully navigating today’s modern and connected world. As a result, building a diverse talent pipeline in these fields is crucial for driving innovation and technological advancement. While women’s representation in STEM has increased 79% over the past 30 years, they make up only 28% of the STEM workforce and 12% of C-suite positions, according to a 2024 report from the World Economic Forum.

As part of the “Cadettes Who Build” curriculum, Girl Scouts will participate in an interactive building design challenge that will lead them through the essential steps of construction project development. Working in teams, participants will select a building type, then progress through design and construction phases. After sketching their vision and considering elements, including building height and accessibility features, teams will bring their designs to life using cardboard and basic materials while incorporating architectural elements and ensuring structural stability. This hands-on experiment introduces Girl Scouts to concepts in design coordination, construction principles, and collaborative problem-solving used daily in the industry.

“As someone who began my career in construction and spent six years in the field, I know firsthand the transformative power of this industry. It taught me invaluable skills, from fiscal oversight to project management, and helped shape me into the leader I am today,” said Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts CEO Monica Roberts. “Through this long-standing partnership, Suffolk’s commitment to our mission offers a unique and invaluable opportunity to introduce Girl Scouts to a field where women have been historically underrepresented. This partnership not only opens doors for girls to explore a variety of careers, but it also allows them to see the possibilities for

themselves—showing that with determination, skills, and confidence, they too can pursue and excel in the construction industry.”

Building on its 10-year partnership with GSEMA, Suffolk has grown its program by expanding from Girl Scout Brownies to Juniors to Cadettes and now introducing a career panel and Q&A session featuring Suffolk’s women leaders. This evolution creates meaningful connections between Girl Scouts and industry mentors at a crucial age for beginning career exploration and helps inspire the next generation to pursue construction and engineering careers while helping address the industry’s gender gap.

“Through our partnership with GSEMA, our commitment to recruiting a more diverse workforce and our support for initiatives such as the ‘Million Women in Construction’ pledge, we are taking concrete steps to address the gender gap in construction and STEM-related careers,” said Pat Lucey, EVP Suffolk’s Northeast Operations. “By connecting young women with construction industry mentors and showing them the various career paths and opportunities in our exciting industry, we hope to inspire the next generation of builders, architects, engineers, and leaders who will help transform city skylines of the future.”

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