Girls Explore the Economy

We believe all girls have the right to prepare for interesting work and economic independence! Each winter in our afterschool programs, groups explore a unit on economic literacy. They learn how the economy affects us locally and globally, explore their own attitudes and knowledge of money and practice responsibility through activities that demonstrate how to earn, spend, save and share money wisely.

The girls discussed what our taxes support, and then they used Skittles to learn about different tax rates! They brainstormed how they would divide up their ‘tax Skittles’ if they were in government.
Girls Learn How to Code

Girls at Hmong International Academy (HIA) explored the essential basics of coding. Youth learned that coding requires patience, a set goal outcome and the ability to correct mistakes. Missing a single step could cause a big problem in their final outcome. They wrapped up their session with a fun hands-on activity with Perler beads, building keychains with precision by following color and placement guides – an activity similar to computer programming.

With learning and fun in mind, young girls at HIA discovered that they could be coders, too! From copying and posting YouTube videos to programming youth phone apps, coding is happening naturally in everyone’s life!

To learn more about coding, visit madewithcode.com

Girls Inc. Staff Highlight

Top left to right:

Niani Cunningham is the Internship Liaison and she is a twin.

Ariel Parry is an Afterschool Counselor and on warm and sunny days, she enjoys bike riding and spending time outdoors.

Sophia Kaut is an Afterschool Counselor and has been playing the violin since she was four years old.

Bottom left to right:

Brita Higgins is a Girls RAP Counselor and she loves snakes and had four pet snakes when she was little.

Emily Vang is a Girls Inc. Eureka! Youth Counselor and she loves to draw and play basketball.
Just Because... Poems

In January, Eureka! girls met Isha Camara, a local spoken word poet and college student pursuing a career in STEM. Isha spoke about growing up in South Minneapolis, her passion for self-expression and her experience as an endocrinology student at the University of Wisconsin. She shared a few of her poems and then supported girls as they wrote their own poems using the framework of a “Just because…” poem.

This framework encourages writers to think about stereotypes they have faced in their life and confront them. At first, many felt shy and insecure about exploring poetry. A few minutes into writing, *Grace noted, “It’s just so hard to be creative. I don’t even know what to write.” Youth counselors supported Pilots through the writing process by creating a safe space for creativity. Isha then shared her own “Just because…” poem and asked youth to share theirs. Grace read her first line: “Just because I’m short, doesn’t mean I can’t do it.” Her peers instantly encouraged Grace to keep reading! Eureka! inspires girls to confront stereotypes in STEM through creative means like poetry.

Congratulations Scholarship Winners!

Eden and Anisa received a Girls Inc. National Scholarship to support their goal of attending college! Eden and Anisa were selected through a competitive national process.

Eden joined YWCA Minneapolis Girls and Youth in the summer of fourth grade as a Girls Inc. camper. Eden has since participated in Eureka!, Girls Council for Advocacy and Change and Teen Action Council through Girls Inc. National. Eden shares, “The Girls Inc. National Scholarship can make my dream to attend college and study chemical engineering a reality. YWCA Minneapolis has been the village behind my success in advocacy, networking, leadership and academics. This scholarship would help sustain and grow my success. It will continue to give me a fair shot at a future of success. A future that can inspire another girl to pursue her dreams as relentlessly as I have.”

Anisa joined YWCA Minneapolis Girls and Youth in 2015 as a member of the inaugural cohort of Eureka!. Anisa is also a founding member of Girls Inc. Healthcare Ambassadors. Anisa shares, “College for me is a once in a lifetime opportunity because I know not everyone is fortunate enough to attend. Thanks to Girls Inc., I developed a dream and paved a pathway. I applied for this scholarship because I have big dreams and nothing will stop me from achieving them.”

The Girls Inc. National Scholarship application opens in August and Girls Inc. participants in middle and high school apply through their Girls Inc. affiliate.
Hearing Women’s Stories from Shakopee Correctional Facility

“My life could have been different if I made a couple different choices.”

Recently, the Girls Resolution and Prevention (RAP) program participants were visited by women in an early release program for nonviolent offenders at Shakopee Correctional Facility. It was an evening of brave storytelling and vulnerability – the women shared their life stories and the path that led to their incarceration. They also shared real life facts of being in prison – like three-minute showers, waking up at 5:00 am every day and the often challenging limits on phone calls and visits with family. Overall, the message that the women left the girls with was one of hope. “I didn’t know before, but now I do,” said one woman. “There is a different way.” The women encouraged the girls to value themselves, think about what they want for the future and make positive choices to get there.

Girls Inc. Council for Advocacy and Change

Shout out to Girls Inc. Council for Advocacy and Change (GCAC) for creating their own pictures of what it means to be a STRONG, SMART and BOLD girl. Zaraia wrote, “GCAC is a space where girls can look forward to coming, connecting with diverse girls and making change. My favorite activity we did during GCAC was our leadership retreat. We built strong sisterhood with each other and jumpstarted our community action projects. It was nice to have a day dedicated to building our own community, then building off of that to help our communities. I personally love GCAC because it is a space for me to put my ideas into action, make change for my community and connect with girls that are alike and different from me.”


Questions? Contact our department at 612-215-4372 or at girlsinc@ywcampls.org