



Girls exPRESS

Volume II, Issue 1, Winter 2008

SHE VOTES! DC girls discuss politics, the election, and the value of the vote!



A session of **She Votes**, a Girls Inc. initiative to provide context to girls around the issue of women and voting, was presented to girls at **Hart Middle School**. The **She Votes** activity was led by Girls Inc.'s national Public Policy Director, April Osajima. Through several interesting activities, girls learned about the suffrage movements and the struggle for women's right to vote. They were very surprised by the history of voting rights and the status of women in elected office even up to present time. For example, did you know that even today women still account for only 16 percent of Congress and 8 out of 50 governors?

Ms. Davis, our supportive Hart teacher commented, "I heard the girls — they were so engaged for the whole session!" Indeed, the girls actively discussed the value of the vote, including the age at which they believe it would be "fair" to vote. Here are some of their comments:

"Kids should be able to vote because we care about education, clean schools and good teachers."

"If we can drive at 15-16, we should be able to vote!"

"At 14, you can get a summer job, why not vote?"

"We need more women in Congress and the Senate because females make good decisions. They worry about children and education."

And, finally, when asked what the girls care most about and what the election issues should include, the girls agreed, "...**more parks, including fixing the broken swings; clean schools; good teachers; the war and freedom.**"

Look for these smart young women to make a difference as voters and potential elected leaders of tomorrow!

Girls Inc. WDCMA thanks...

Eileen Fisher, for its supportive stance on girls and women; for recognizing Girls Inc. WDCMA as a non-profit working to close the gender gap by *inspiring all girls to be strong, smart and bold*. While shoppers enjoyed the upbeat and beautiful surroundings of **Eileen Fisher** stores at Tysons Galleria and Westfield Montgomery shopping malls, 10% of all proceeds from purchases benefited Girls Inc. WDCMA! Thank you, Eileen Fisher, for your generosity and compassion.

The DC Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation, The Freddie Mac Foundation, the Washington Area Women's Foundation and Fannie Mae, for continuing to support Girls Inc. WDCMA programming through grants that strengthen and assist girls in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

The generous women of **Cisco, Lockheed Martin and Pink Magazine** for contributions that supported holiday gifts, books and program supplies for girls.



Girls Inc. WDCMA Welcomes New Board Members!

We are proud to welcome new board members: Rosie Allen-Herring, Director, DC Initiatives at Fannie Mae and Kimberly J. Shanahan, Senior Client Partner, Advanced Technology Practice, Korn/Ferry International.



Greetings to New Staff

Welcome to Kim Dawson, Girls Inc. WDCMA's new Communications Assistant. Kim hails from sunny California and will pursue her Ph.D. in English while working on various projects for Girls Inc. WDCMA.



Cheers and Good Luck!

Beth Shively, Girls Inc. WDCMA's Administrative Assistant for 3 years, has moved to Ohio to pursue her Ph.D. in Women's Studies. Congratulations and good luck to Beth!

Girls Inc. WDCMA Inaugural Gala in Washington, DC!

On October 5, 2007, Washington, DC was bustling when Girls Inc. WDCMA held its first-ever Fall gala at the Four Seasons hotel. With over 200 guests, the gala raised much needed program funds for DC area girls. The evening was a tribute to the individuals and corporations who give of their time and support to ensure that Girls Inc. WDCMA continues to provide outcome-based curriculum to girls. To see more photos of this fabulous event, go to www.girlsincdc.org and click on the Events page! **And, mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual Girls Inc. WDCMA Fall Gala, to be held on October 3, 2008 at the Four Seasons Hotel, Georgetown!**



Will Power, Won't Power Facilitator, Sonija Parson, looks on in delight as Tatiana chats about how to abstain from risky behaviors.

★ **Will Power, Won't Power!** Through partnerships with Horton's Kids and Ideal Public Charter School, girls meet weekly to practice saying "no" to unwanted sexual and societal pressures. The girls are working thoughtfully to strengthen their bonds of sisterhood. As Jo Vada says, "You don't have to have sex with a boy to fit in. If you have goals, you just go ahead and achieve those goals first. Boys can wait." **Now, that's strong, smart and bold!**

★ **Equal Earners, Savvy Spenders!** Girls at Hart Middle School and Kelly Miller Middle School are learning about money, financial wants and needs, career and banking choices, investments and the global marketplace. Through these sessions, girls are raising awareness of their own money habits, recognizing their responsibilities to the economy and are learning the importance of starting early to make wise choices about money and money management.

★ **Money Talks! A Family Financial Literacy Workshop**

Through this powerful workshop, girls and their parent/guardians explore that often controversial topic of money! Girls and adults work together, then break out into separate sessions to explore personal and family money matters before returning to the full group to share and discuss what they've learned.

Kanaya Oke said, "I liked the budgeting exercises." Kanaya learned "that it is better to budget my money instead of spending it all."

One Mom said the best part of it for her was spending quality time with her daughter, especially on a Saturday!

★ **The Leadership Circle!** Sixteen girls from Ward 7 meet on Saturdays to develop their talents and strengthen their advocacy skills. Girls set their own Circle Expectations including to: Be more confident in myself, Be on time, Learn More, Learn how to be a leader, Be a better person, Think about our futures, Always ask questions! Their current project includes developing Public Service Announcements on topics of importance to them. These young leaders want more attention given to: Anti-drugs, STDs/Safe Sex, Self-Esteem and Women, Teen Deaths, Abuse. **YES!** Look for more on this project in the next edition of **Girls exPRESS**.

GET INVOLVED—SEARCH FOR GOOD!

★ Change your search engine to www.goodsearch.com and select Girls Inc. of the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area as your organization of choice. We'll get a penny every time you search! Think of our impact! If 1,000 people search on our behalf with only three searches a day, we could earn \$10,950 a year for girls in our community! This *is* a search for good! **And we thank you!**

★ **All Girls Inc. programs support the DC Public School academic standards and benchmarks while building the social skills, problem-solving, critical thinking and team work abilities that are necessary to be successful in college and career. Interested in having a Girls Inc. program in your setting? Contact Kim Dawson at 202.296.0613!**

★ Get to know...one of our Fabulous Program Facilitators...Sonija Parson

Sonija is a facilitator of the Girls Inc. program, **Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy**. Sonija, a Washington, DC native, is a graduate of Bates College, where she majored in Women's and Gender Studies. She is also a practicing traditional midwife in Mexico, and a Certified Doula in Washington, DC. Sonija is fluent in Spanish, and brings a passion for women's health, a dedication to empowering young girls become even stronger women, and a love of the city where she grew up!

★★★★★
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Mail to:

**Girls Inc. WDCMA
1001 Connecticut Ave, NW Suite 740
Washington, DC 20036**

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THANK YOU!

From Denese Lombardi, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

At Girls Incorporated, we are proud of the fact that our programming is **intentional** and **compensatory**. These two concepts drive our unique perspective; they lead to successful results and to positive impact on the girls we serve. When we are **intentional**, *we think specifically about the needs of girls* and how each aspect of our programming relates to their needs. **Intentional** programming *affirms girls' needs* and delivers with the goal of making a clear and specific difference in their lives. **Compensatory** programming takes into account that gender discrimination still exists for girls. **Compensatory** programming enables girls to overcome the numerous barriers that would otherwise limit them from reaching and fulfilling their potential. **Intentional and compensatory programming means putting girls first!**

Whether you're a teacher in a busy and demanding environment, a parent with active, creative children, or someone who simply acknowledges that gender inequities exist, we can all support girls by creating intentional and compensatory moments in every day life, moments where girls can truly thrive.

Here are some great tips from our National Resource Center:

Encourage Girls

- Affirm a girls' right to speak up and speak out!
- Listen to girls and learn from them about their issues and opinions.
- Support girls to channel their thoughts and feelings into positive actions.
- Provide comfortable and interesting places and ways for girls to gather with one another.
- Help girls envision what's possible and to work toward big goals like justice, equality, environmental preservation and the like.
- Help girls develop respect for self and one another and celebrate their similarities as well as their differences.

Stay in the background



Be an advisor rather than a director; allow girls to take charge!

Ask girls questions that lead them to express their ideas and to problem-solve.

Allow girls to share stories of success and challenge with one another.

Encourage girls to build a sister support system.

Foster pride in girls, women and their achievements

Anchor girls' experiences in the context of "herstory" and the achievements of girls and women across many time periods and cultures.

Introduce girls to women who have made and are making a difference in many fields and in many ways.

Help girls to identify and celebrate the "she-roes" they have.

Articulate gender challenges

Help girls acknowledge gender challenges and yet succeed in traditional, male dominated areas.



Provide girls with opportunities to be leaders and to sustain their leadership.

Avoid deferring to boys in mixed-sex settings.

Help girls support each other & avoid pressure to compete for boys' attention.

Connect, support and defend girls' communities

Help girls build community and maintain support and resilience in the face of challenge and adversity.

Help girls navigate criticism and self-doubt.

Help girls honor their connection to one another and value being there for each other for the long haul!

Assume that a girl is strong, smart and bold and she will rise to that expectation!



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**"I have the right
to prepare for interest-
ing work and
economic independence"**

The Girls' Bill of Rights

**girls
inc.**[®]

Girls Incorporated of the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area

1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 740
Washington, DC 20036
202.296.0613 p
202.296.0594 f
www.girlsincdc.org

**"As the oldest girl-centered organiza-
tion in the U.S., Girls Inc. has been
transforming girls' view of themselves
and their opportunities for generations.
Girls Inc. is much more than an after-
school program — we are the people and
place that help girls succeed."**

*Girls Incorporated Vision: Empowered girls and an Equitable
Society Report, January, 2008*

Save the Dates!

★ **April 29, 2008 Girls Inc.**

**National Celebration Luncheon, Capitol Hilton,
Washington, DC**

★ **October 3, 2008**

**Girls Inc. WDCMA Fall Gala, Four Seasons Hotel,
Georgetown**

**For both events, call 202.296.0613 for information, sponsor-
ship opportunities and tickets.**