

Dear Donors and Supporters,

Hi, my name is Raven, and I'm a Girl Scout of 10 years and counting. A Senior-to-be is more precise. See, I never thought I would join Girl Scouts, let alone stay in it this long. But to be honest, I couldn't picture my life any other way because of the influence Girl Scouts has had in my life.

I can't fully describe the large role it has played for me. I met my best friend in Girl Scouts and we're still like sisters today. I met all of my other friends through her and Girl Scouts. With my friends and troop I've learned how to **speak up, stand out, and just be me.** I even wear my full uniform to school - polo shirt, vest, and khakis on important days of Girl Scouts. Sometimes I even wear my uniform when I need some confidence to do a presentation.



Girl Scouts has changed my life. It's my constant in life; it's my comfort zone. People ask me how I can go around and be my weirdest - just me - and not care what people think of me. It's because I have learned that it doesn't matter. Why should I care what others think?



This may seem small, but to me it's a great big accomplishment. Why? Well, it's because I'm not the most social person out there; I have autism, ADHD, social anxiety, and OCD, and I come from a low-income, single-parent family. It can be hard to find a place where I feel like I don't have to be afraid, somewhere I feel like I belong. Girl Scouts has always been the place where I'm not afraid to be myself, where no one will judge me, and where I can help make my community a better place.

I have been given so many great opportunities in Girl Scouts. Completing my Silver Award and having the award presented to me in front of nearly 300 people was one of the best things I could have ever done. My project did a lot of good and is being used frequently by the people who it was intended for. Knowing what I care for and what it's all about has helped me educate others. People now have a better understanding of autism and mental health because of my perseverance to complete my Silver Award.

My troop and I do a ton of service projects, like creating tornado shelter kits and hosting an annual Easter egg hunt for our community. The largest thing we've done has been designing, paying for, and building our own park for our community. We started when we were Daisies, and finally finished it after five years of saving up. From everything we have accomplished, when I look back I am happy I was a part of it all; going from an eager Daisy to planning my own meetings, and even being the leaders of our local Daisy troop now.



I am capable of so much more than I ever thought possible. Having my mother as the troop leader and for a short time our service unit leader, I've learned a lot because of Girl Scouts. I want to see more girls like me achieving their goals in Girl Scouts. Yes, it might get stressful at times, but I always know that my sisters are there to help me

get back up when I fall down, helping me to make my way even higher and closer to reaching my dreams.

Overall, Girl Scouts is the best thing I have found to make myself and the world around me better. I can't wait to help inspire younger girls to join, and even stick around until they graduate high school. Make a difference, because if someone won't take the first step, there'll never be a change. If you don't think you can do something or even try, you'll never know how you can change the world around you. Girl Scouts did that for me.

Sincerely,

Raven