



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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of Central Alabama

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Girls Inc. of Central Alabama announced today that by 2020 it will have doubled the number of girls who receive its most intensive programming through a \$130,000 grant from Girls Inc. National.

The growth plan includes establishing “Girls Inc. Clubs” to provide in-school programming to 350 girls in Birmingham, Bessemer, Jasper and Shelby County schools; partnering with the Housing Authority of the Birmingham District (HABD) to provide programming to girls living in public housing through the new Campus of Hope; expanding its summer camp program to Bessemer and Shelby County; and increasing the capacity of its after-school program in Crestwood.

“We are thrilled to be one of the Girls Inc. affiliates chosen to receive this funding for growth,” said Dr. Connie Hill, Girls Inc. of Central Alabama CEO. “Although our programs affect thousands of lives each year, we serve only a small fraction of the girls growing up in Central Alabama who could benefit from the life-changing experience Girls Inc. provides. This funding will enable us to bring the Girls Inc. Experience to even more girls.”

Girls Inc. National has set a goal to double the number of girls served with impact – meaning they receive 50 hours or more of the full Girls Inc. programming each year – nationwide by 2020. To reach that goal, it is distributing \$10 million in funds it received in 2016 from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, plus an additional \$7 million in matching funds, to Girls Inc. affiliates throughout the United States. To receive a portion of the funding, Girls Inc. affiliates submitted proposals to expand their programming to reach more girls. Central Alabama’s proposal was selected for two years of funding. Additional funding will be raised locally to sustain this growth.

Girls Inc. of Central Alabama offers classes to over 4,800 girls in our five-county area each year but only provides its most impactful programming of 50 hours a year or more to 440 girls through its after-school and

summer programming. That's going to change, thanks in part to the funding provided from the National office.

"With this funding, we will be increasing our presence in Birmingham City, Jasper City, Bessemer City, and Shelby County schools," Hill said. "Our growth strategy will move from five hours of community-based programming to 50 hours of The Girls Inc. Experience. In this way, girls who are not located near our Crestwood or Walker County Centers will receive the same benefits as those who are."

The plan also calls for implementing a new summer camp in Shelby County by next summer, increasing the number of girls who can attend the existing Walker County camp, and adding a SMART (Science Math And Related Technology) camp this summer for Birmingham City GEAR UP students.

With those strategies, along with on-site programming for girls living at the Mark's Village public housing community through the Birmingham Housing Authority's Campus of Hope, Girls Inc. will provide 50 hours or more of programming to over 880 girls each year.

More girls will be enrolled in Girls Inc.'s after-school program in Crestwood as well, Hill said.

"Girls today face real and profound gender, economic, and social barriers," said Jessica Grover, Girls Inc. of Central Alabama Board Chair. "I'm excited to be a part of Girls Inc., and I know that Girls Inc. works, not only because of the research that we do, but because of the stories of the girls who have gone through our programs. The Girls Inc. experience, our comprehensive approach to whole-girl development, allows girls to discover and build their inherent strengths, develop resilience and plan for and work towards their future goals."

ABOUT GIRLS INC. of CENTRAL ALABAMA

Since 1938, Girls Inc. of Central Alabama has provided gender-specific programs for school-age girls of diverse racial and economic backgrounds in the Birmingham area. We are an affiliate of National Girls Inc. and have been a United Way partner agency since 1954. The Girls Inc. Experience consists of people, an environment and programming that, together, empower girls to succeed. Trained staff and volunteers build lasting, mentoring relationships in pro-girl, girls-only spaces. Whether a girl participates in our in-school, after-school or summer programs, she will receive academic support, learn about health and wellness and develop her life skills. Our goal is to help girls achieve at their highest level.

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