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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Girl Scouts Break Ground on New Solar STEM Lab/Classroom at Amahami Adventure Center in Deposit**

**Johnson City, N.Y.** (November 7, 2019) — Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways (GSNYPENN) broke ground yesterday on a new state-of-the-art solar STEM lab/classroom at its Amahami Adventure Center property located in Deposit. The facility will support girls as leaders in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields in a green way and serve as a resource for the greater Binghamton-Southern Tier region. Projected completion date is spring 2020.

According to Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), reports show that STEM occupations are growing at double the rate of other professions in the U.S. Women currently hold less than 28 percent of STEM jobs but make up more than 47 percent of the workforce. The nation is facing a STEM workforce crisis—in the next decade, 1 million new professionals will be needed. To be effective and long-lasting, STEM engagement needs to start early.

GSUSA and its chartered councils—including GSNYPENN—have committed to filling the workforce pipeline. To help make this reality, GSUSA launched the Girl Scout STEM Pledge, a multi-year initiative to put 2.5 million girls through the Movement’s hands-on STEM programming by the year 2025. Through Girl Scouting, girls explore progressive, girl-led STEM activities at every level. The lab/classroom will allow GSNYPENN to deliver even more STEM programming to its members in a green, state-of-the-art facility.

“Girl Scouts has the reach and proven programming to motivate a new generation of girls to explore STEM and become confident leaders. Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways plans to do our part to help meet this challenge and not only serve our members with our new solar STEM lab and classroom, but also the greater Binghamton and Southern Tier communities,” says GSNYPENN CEO Julie Dale. “The addition of this facility at Amahami will help us continue our mission of building girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place by better preparing them for careers in STEM disciplines. We’re especially grateful to the donors and community organizations helping us build this resource and with whom we hope to partner on future programming.”

The solar STEM lab/classroom is a one-story building that can host up to 30 people. The facility includes a learning lab/classroom and solar equipment viewing area. The facility’s solar energy will be gauged in real-time and displayed on TV monitors for viewing. In addition, a “behind the scenes” peek inside the solar equipment room will be possible via a glass viewing wall.

The building will be entirely self-sustaining for its electrical needs. In addition, planned solar roof panels are predicted to contribute substantially to the energy needs of the entire camp property at a projected savings of \$9,000 annually. Once operational, the facility will be available for use by GSNYPENN, in addition to outside organizations and the public for a fee. It’s planned to be included as a destination along the proposed Southern Tier STEAM Trail.

The solar STEM lab/classroom is projected to cost approximately \$300,000. To date, GSNYPENN has raised \$280,000. Funding for the project includes gifts from two generous donors who are Girl Scout alums/families who wish to remain anonymous. In addition, the project is being funded by community grants from Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, United Way of Broome County, Women’s Fund of the Community Foundation for South Central New York, Guthrie and IBM (in recognition of GSNYPENN Board Member Michael Sabo’s volunteer service and retirement from the company).

In-kind support for the project has been provided by SUNY Broome Community College. In addition, students under the direction of SUNY Broome Associate Professor and Chair of Visual Communications Patricia Evans are providing interior design ideas to help outfit the inside of the building.

Joining GSNYPENN senior leadership, staff and board members at the groundbreaking held Wednesday, November 6 at 11 a.m. were representatives from Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, United Way Broome County, Friends of Amahami, Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce, SUNY Broome and ETM Solar Works.

[Photos from the groundbreaking and final building renderings are available here.](#)

Pictured in photos, L-R, are:

Randy Hay – Builder, Randy Hay Construction Inc.  
Charles “Lad” McKenzie – President & Director, Robinson Broadhurst Foundation  
Alexis Savidge - Community Initiatives Associate, United Way Broome County  
Michael Sabo – Board Member, GSNYPENN & IBM retiree  
Elizabeth Davidson – Architect  
Julie Dale – CEO, GSNYPENN

Those interested in helping further support the solar STEM lab/classroom through gifts and/or programming may contact Director of Development JoAnne Morak at 1.855.213.8555 x2052 or [jmorak@gsnypenn.org](mailto:jmorak@gsnypenn.org).

Girl Scouts serves girls in grade K-12. Annual membership is \$25. Financial assistance is available. To register a girl online, visit [gsnypenn.org/join](http://gsnypenn.org/join). To become an adult volunteer, learn more at [gsnypenn.org/volunteer](http://gsnypenn.org/volunteer).



*Pictured at the November 6 groundbreaking of the new solar STEM lab/classroom at Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways' Amahami Adventure Center in Deposit, NY, are (L-R): Randy Hay, Builder, Randy Hay Construction Inc.; Charles “Lad” McKenzie, President & Director, Robinson Broadhurst Foundation; Alexis Savidge, Community Initiatives Associate, United Way Broome County; Michael Sabo, Board Member, GSNYPENN & IBM retiree; Elizabeth Davidson, Architect; and Julie Dale, CEO, GSNYPENN.*

*(image courtesy of Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways)*

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**Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, Inc.**

Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. We believe in the power of every G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)™ to change the world. Our extraordinary journey began more than 100 years ago with the original G.I.R.L., Juliette Gordon “Daisy” Low. Today we continue the Girl Scout mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. GSNYPENN is chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to administer the Girl Scout program in 24 counties of New York and two in Pennsylvania. We offer every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. Learn more by visiting [gsnypenn.org](http://gsnypenn.org), calling 1.855.213.8555, emailing [info@gsnypenn.org](mailto:info@gsnypenn.org) or following @GSNYPENN on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/GSNYPENN), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/GSNYPENN), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/GSNYPENN) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/GSNYPENN).