



NEWS RELEASE

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Los Angeles Girl Scouts support school district, food centers, others through donation program

More than 163,000 cookie packages delivered to charitable organizations in Los Angeles, New York

LOS ANGELES—Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles (GSGLA) is donating 18,240 packages of Girl Scout cookies to Los Angeles Unified School District in support of the district's Grab & Go program to help feed those who are food insecure. Another 17,800 packages are going to the Red Cross in New York, in support of a sister council and its similar program in that region of the country. Overall, the nonprofit is donating more than 163,000 Girl Scout cookie packages to organizations battling food insecurity.

The donations are through the organization's Gift of Caring program, where Girl Scouts encourage cookie customers to gift a purchase to community partners. In addition to new recipients LAUSD and the Red Cross, donations are also delivered to the Los Angeles Regional Foodbank, Goodwill of Southern California, Blue Star Mothers, Operation Gratitude, and Bob Hope USO.

The addition of Los Angeles Unified this year was motivated by the great need among children and families in Greater Los Angeles whose access to food has been limited by Safer at Home orders. Girl Scouts has a history of championing the idea of youth helping youth; supporting Los Angeles Unified's Grab & Go program easily aligned.

"Sometimes, it's acts of comfort that are needed most, and we hope that this gift reminds each recipient that life can be sweet—even when it's hard—and that there is comfort in even simple gestures."

-Theresa Edy-Kiene, CEO, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles

The global pandemic has also impacted and interrupted the cookie season of several Girl Scout councils across the nation, including Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York. GSGLA transferred some of its Gift of Caring purchases to the New York council, which then gifted the nearly 18,000 packages—on GSGLA's behalf—to its local Red Cross chapter. The Red Cross plans to distribute the donation to COVID-19 first responders, food banks, and much-needed blood donors.

“Considering what we are all facing right now, it’s a simple act to include Girl Scout cookies in a Grab & Go meal for a hungry family or to a first-responder in New York,” said GSGLA CEO Theresa Edy-Kiene of her donation to one of the states hit hardest by the pandemic. “Sometimes, it’s acts of comfort that are needed most, and we hope that this gift reminds each recipient that life can be sweet—even when it’s hard—and that there is comfort in even simple gestures.”

“I’m grateful for the tireless efforts of my colleagues, the many volunteers and generous donors like the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles for their support in these relief efforts.”

*-Austin Buetner,
Superintendent, Los Angeles
Unified School District*

Los Angeles Unified plans to include the cookies in meals available at its 63 Grab & Go Food Service Centers at school sites across the district, where students, their families, and anyone else in need of a nutritious meal can receive two meals per person, per day.

“This crisis is a stark reminder of the safety net public schools provide to the students and families they serve,” Los Angeles Unified Superintendent Austin Beutner said. “As a fan of Thin Mints myself, I know this special treat will bring smiles to many children. I’m grateful for the tireless efforts of my colleagues, the many volunteers and

generous donors like the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles for their support in these relief efforts.”

The Grab & Go food program recently hit a milestone—since it began in March, the program has served 10 million meals to those in need. Nearly 80% of Los Angeles Unified students live in households in poverty, and these relief efforts have helped more people than any other effort in the country, according to a [news release from the district](#).

Carla Barrera-Ortiz, director of partnerships and grants for Los Angeles Unified, said she was touched to learn the local Girl Scouts council wanted to donate 1,520 cases of cookies to families in need of food. As a child whose family emigrated from Mexico, Barrera-Ortiz didn’t speak much English when she arrived in the U.S., but her Girl Scout troop leader was bilingual, and the troop became a safe space for her and her sister.

“I can’t say enough about what I learned through the Girl Scouts,” she said.

About Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, serves nearly 47,000 girl members in grades K-12 in partnership with nearly 24,000 adult volunteer members throughout the diverse communities of Los Angeles County and parts of Kern, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. As the largest girl leadership development organization in Southern California, GSGLA engages girls in grades K-12 through programs in Life Skills, Entrepreneurship, Outdoor, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math). To join, volunteer, reconnect, or support, visit girlscoutsla.org.

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