



Joan, Yvonne, and Tannis.



Backpacking in 2005 with Tannis' troop.



Talking about cookies at K-Earth 101.

What it Means to Lead – Profile of Yvonne Schueller

Growing up in San Pedro, Yvonne Schueller discovered Girl Scouts in first grade. However, her Girl Scout experience was cut short several months later due to a lack of volunteers. Without a sisterhood of support, caring leaders, and the ability to develop self-esteem and confidence through Girl Scouts, Yvonne's life path was altered. During Yvonne's senior year of high school, she became pregnant, and after graduation gave birth to her beautiful daughter, Tannis.

As a single mother, Yvonne worked diligently to put herself through college. The first in her family to earn a college degree, Yvonne graduated with a bachelor's degree in Women's Studies from USC. Recognizing the value of Girl Scouting, Yvonne enrolled Tannis. In seventh grade, Tannis' troop leader quit. Though Yvonne was nervous to raise her hand to become the new leader, she didn't want Tannis to miss out on the activities, friendships, and leadership opportunities that Girl Scouts has to offer. It didn't take long for Yvonne to overcome her shyness and blossom as a Girl Scout leader. Through team work, Yvonne's Troop 370 achieved a Silver Award. Later, Tannis, along with two members of her troop, earned their Gold Awards (the highest achievement in Girl Scouts) in 2006.

When her second daughter, Joan, became a Daisy, Yvonne didn't hesitate to lead the troop of 35 Daisies. *"I had experience as a leader and a passion for Girl Scouts. It was an easy decision to make. I would never say no to any girl because I think so much about what my life would have been like if I had someone telling me I could do it. Everyone says, 'You can be what you want to be,' but they don't show you how. Girl Scouts rocks because they have it laid out. They give girls real opportunities to lead."*

Yvonne's troop sewing project last year is a great example. When Los Angeles hosted the Special Olympics, one of our Girl Scout Gold Awardees with Down syndrome asked troops to provide neck wraps with cooling beads for athletes. Drawing from their past experience learning how to sew and quilt for their Bronze Award, Yvonne's older Cadette troop seized this opportunity to collaborate with younger Brownies and Juniors. Yvonne's troop prepared a program with video footage of Special Olympics (focusing on areas of girl interest such as soccer and swimming) and they discussed the success of the Girl Scout Gold Awardee with

Down syndrome. The girls also invited a mother to share her perspective on growing up with a sister who had Down syndrome.

Yvonne shared, *“The girls didn’t just teach the Brownies and Juniors how to sew without purpose. They gave of themselves by teaching sewing, but incorporated something amazing like the Special Olympics – that’s all Girl Scouts. And it is a team effort. One Cadette, one Brownie, and one Junior at each machine for four to five hours on a Sunday. To see younger girls look up to older girls, and see older girls become leaders, that’s the power of Girl Scouts.”* The girls successfully donated 70 neck wraps and will carry this positive memory into their bright futures!

At Girl Scouts, leadership development and community service isn’t just for girls. Yvonne’s transformation from an introverted, reticent troop leader to an outspoken advocate for girls is a familiar volunteer trajectory. *“Girl Scouts gave me the opportunity to speak and to lead. Every time I say yes, guess what? I learn something new.”* From chaperoning girl delegates at the national convention, to rock climbing in the Mojave Desert, to providing leadership on the *“My Promise, My Faith”* national initiative, to her role as service unit manager, to talking about cookies with her troop on K-Earth 101 – Yvonne knows what it means lead!

After Yvonne attended a past Annual Meeting and Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and met Dianne Belk, founder of the Juliette Gordon Low Society, Yvonne took another leadership step in the Girl Scouts Movement. She included Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles in her family’s estate plans. Inspired by Dianne’s remarks, Yvonne and her husband, Robert, discussed a planned gift. *“We are a Christian family who believe in giving away 10% of our income. We have two daughters and we know the importance of raising strong leaders. You know how people talk about saving the earth for our children? To us, keeping Girl Scouts going is just as important to the future of our grandkids as clean water and air. We want this opportunity to stay for girls in L.A. forever.”*

Legacy support will give girls and volunteers the Girl Scouts Leadership Experience and provide financial assistance to those who need it. Yvonne and Robert are a part of our **Juliette Gordon Low Society**, which recognizes individuals who have named Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles as a beneficiary in their wills, trusts, insurance plans, or retirement accounts. We are deeply grateful for their outstanding investment in girls!

If you have included Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles in your estate plans, please let us know so that we can thank and recognize you as a member of the Juliette Gordon Low Society. To notify us or to find out more information, contact Chris Dean at 626-677-2264 or cdean@girlscoutsla.org. Your support will inspire others and will help girls discover what it means to lead.



CEO Lise Luttgens, Congresswoman Janice Hahn, a representative from Councilman Joe Buscaino's office, Yvonne, and troop members in a friendship circle, singing "Make New Friends."



Joan's troop in December 2015 on a YES program at Disneyland.



Yvonne and Joan rock climbing in Mojave with GS Mojave Primitive Encampment, April 2014.



Yvonne with her Girl Scouts mentor Kris Brust.