

# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Interesting women working in math and science fields

**FROM:** Heather Johnston Nicholson, Director of Research

**DATE:** March 24, 2000

**RE:** Girls Link Gets SMART

*Are you excited enough about the work you do to make sure that girls today recognize opportunities?*

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**Girls Inc.** is the national youth organization that "inspires all girls to be *strong, smart and bold*<sup>SM</sup>." With roots in the Industrial Revolution and a proud history of 54 years as a national organization, Girls Inc. has provided vital opportunities to millions of American girls, particularly girls with limited access to other resources. Girls Inc. programming is offered in over a thousand program sites, operated by over 130 affiliates and partner organizations, in big cities and small towns in 37 states. They are located in Girls Inc. centers, schools, public housing, YWCAs, Salvation Army youth centers, community centers and camps -- everywhere girls and young women are found.

Girls Inc. develops research-based, informal education programs that encourage girls to take risks and master physical, intellectual and emotional challenges. Major programs address math, science and technology education, pregnancy prevention, media literacy, adolescent health, substance abuse prevention, leadership and sports participation. **Operation SMART**<sup>SM</sup> (science, math and relevant technology), developed in 1985, is now offered by virtually every Girls Inc. affiliate and program partner.

Girls Inc. annually serves about 350,000 of the young people most likely to be left or pushed out of the science, math, technology and engineering pipeline due to tracking in their schools and/or the absence of adequate career guidance. Sixty-two percent of girls served live in families with an annual income of \$20,000 or less and over half live in single parent households, most of which are headed by women. Six out of ten are girls of color; one out of seven speaks a language other than English at home. Almost all Girls Inc. affiliates and program partners serve girls with disabilities.

The original impetus for developing Operation SMART came from the realization that girls were not preparing for well-paying careers involving science, math or technology. In the fifteen years since girls have caught up to boys in taking core classes in math and science. However, girls are still underrepresented in higher levels of these fields, both at the educational and career levels.

**GirlsLink Gets SMART**, funded by a grant from the Lucent Technologies Foundation, builds on existing Operation SMART programming and supports the Girls Inc. mission in several ways:

- ❶ It targets girls in middle school, when girls begin to make choices that will keep them in the science, math, engineering and technology and postsecondary education pipelines.
- ❷ It provides girls, many of whom have limited opportunities to use computers, with developmentally appropriate opportunities to develop computer literacy and safe opportunities to share what they learn.

(and here's where you come in!)

- ❸ ***It connects girls with women who have interesting careers in science, math, engineering and technology and to information on how to prepare for these careers.***

## **Levels of Involvement**

**Profile** A section of the Girls Inc. web site will be dedicated to biographies of women with interesting careers in science, math, engineering and technology. Women will be featured who show that “people like me” are involved in these fields: women who juggle personal life, family life and career, women of many racial and ethnic backgrounds, women who are the first in their family to go into a math, science or technology field, women whose first language is not English, women with disabilities, women who overcame difficult life circumstances. Pictures of women in their work environment will be included, if at all possible.

**Profile Plus** In addition to the biography, some women will be invited to “chat” with girls in real time or in a question and answer format about science, math, engineering and technology activities and careers. Those featured will also be invited to working with Girls Inc. to develop downloadable hands-on or on-line activities related to her work. These activities, targeting middle school students, will encourage girls’ continuing interest and participation in these areas and engage girls in further educational and career opportunities.

**We're looking for a few *strong, smart and bold*<sup>SM</sup> women. . . .**

Please Fax to: (317) 634-3024

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

URL (web site): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **I am not interested at this time.**

☐ **Profile only**

☐ **Profile Plus**

***Field:***

☐ Agriculture  
☐ Astronomy  
☐ Biochemistry  
☐ Biology  
☐ Biotechnology  
☐ Botany  
☐ Chemistry  
☐ Computer Science  
☐ Earth Sciences

☐ Engineering  
☐ Environmental Science  
☐ Genetics  
☐ Information Science  
☐ Marine Science  
☐ Mathematics  
☐ Medicine  
☐ Pharmacology  
☐ Physics

☐ Physiology  
☐ Psychology/Psychiatry  
☐ Public Health  
☐ Statistics/Actuarial  
Science  
☐ Veterinary Medicine  
☐ Zoology  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Here is a sentence about the work I do: \_\_\_\_\_

***Demographics: We hope to recruit women from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences.***

**Race/Ethnicity**

☐ American Indian/  
Alaskan Native  
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander  
☐ Hispanic/Latina  
☐ Non-Hispanic Black  
☐ Non-Hispanic White  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Age**

☐ 20's  
☐ 30's  
☐ 40's  
☐ 50's  
☐ 60+

**Education**

☐ High School Diploma  
☐ Trade School  
☐ Associate's Degree  
☐ Bachelor's Degree  
☐ Master's Degree  
☐ Doctor's Degree  
☐ Professional Degree  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Residence**

☐ Africa  
☐ Asia  
☐ Australia  
☐ Europe  
☐ North America  
☐ South America  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. Antarctica)

**Disability**

☐ People with Emotional or  
Psychiatric Disabilities  
☐ People with Health  
Conditions e.g. Cancer,  
Diabetes, Heart Condition  
☐ People with Hearing  
Impairments or Who Are  
Deaf  
☐ People with Intellectual  
Disabilities, Including  
Mental Retardation  
☐ People with Learning  
Disabilities  
☐ People With Mobility  
Disabilities  
☐ People with Visual  
Impairments or Who Are  
Blind  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

I (also) recommend the following women for this project:

**Name:**  
**Position:**  
**Organization:**  
**Phone:**  
**Fax:**  
**Email:**

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**Name:**  
**Position:**  
**Organization:**  
**Phone:**  
**Fax:**  
**Email:**

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**Name:**  
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**Position:**  
**Organization:**  
**Phone:**  
**Fax:**  
**Email:**

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Aless Hall at (317) 634-7546 x32 or by email at [ahall@girls-inc.org](mailto:ahall@girls-inc.org) . Forms may be faxed to (317) 634-3024.