

Girl Scout Uniforms Get First Makeover in 20 Years

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BY LISA LOCKWOOD

For the first time in two decades, Girl Scout uniforms are getting a makeover.

Over the course of their 108-year history, Girl Scout uniforms have been designed by icons like Mainbocher, Halston and Bill Blass. Now students at the Fashion Institute of Technology are taking a stab at it.

Girls Scouts of the USA has given the green-light for three students to reimagine the traditional uniform for older scouts to better reflect what they want from their clothing. The new apparel collection, designed for scouts ages five to 17, was created by Nidhi Bhasin, Jenny Feng and Melissa Posner, FIT students from the Fashion Design class of 2020.

The trio offered a variety of options, like cotton-blend and crewneck T-shirts, full-zip hoodies, drawstring joggers, pocketed spandex leggings, cargo pants, a soft knit skater dress, and a light-washed denim jacket - each sporting the iconic Girl Scout trefoil. The size range extends up to 3XL, and prices range from \$10 to \$49.

Girl Scout uniforms have morphed from the original homemade dark blue middie blouses and skirts with sateen ties in 1912 to Mainbocher's loose-fitting dress designs in the Forties, Halston's Seventies blazers and skirts and Bill Blass' kelly green dresses, pants and dropped shoulder blazers in the Eighties. More recently, Girl Scouts have donned green vests with their earned patches, along with white tops paired with skirts or pants.

The student designers were selected by leadership from the FIT D'Tech Lab, an entity within the college's Innovation Center. They completed the designs using 3-D virtual prototyping and an apparel design software platform that ensures minimal waste and eliminates the need for physical sampling. The Girl Scouts and students conducted focus groups with

current scouts to gain insight into what they wanted to see in the designs.

"Girl Scouts really helped strengthen my self-confidence and encouraged me to pursue my interests. With this collection, our shared goal was to not only design trendy attire, but also make sure that girls would feel inspired, proud and powerful while wearing each piece," Bhasin, one of the designers and a Girl Scout alumna, said. "Today's Girl Scouts are the next generation of leaders, so we needed to make sure they dress the part so they can continue to take on the world."

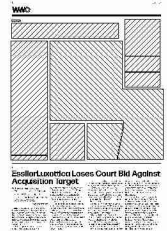
The redesigned official uniform includes a new khaki utility vest for \$34 and pocket sash for \$14 option made exclusively for Girl Scouts in sixth grade through high school. The vest has a cinched waist and epaulet shoulder, and features two functional front pockets. The sash, in four-way stretch woven twill, also has built-in hidden cellphone pockets for easy storage.

Wendy Lou, deputy chief revenue officer of the Girl Scouts, who oversaw the project, said, "At the Girl Scouts, we move at the speed of the girl and adapt our programming and apparel to meet their needs and the world we live in."

The girls, as well as more than 59 million alumni, Lou said, have a "strong affiliation" for the Girl Scout brand and how they represent their connection to it.

"For over a century, we've updated our uniforms every decade or so to reflect the trends at that time, but never quite in this impactful of a way. We heard from some of our older Girl Scouts that they were craving uniforms that were contemporary and functional but also fully customizable to reflect their unique personalities.

These are girls that are making serious change in their local communities and, in some cases, on a national level, so it's important to us that they feel their best while representing us and everything we stand for," she said. "This collection includes fresh updates to our distinctive uniform pieces - like the vest and sash



– but also several other apparel options for everyday life, like joggers or a cargo skirt with functional pockets for smart phones and more, so Girl Scouts (and nonmembers) can proudly demonstrate their association.”

All items are available for preorder at

girlscoutshop.com/gstyle. Consumers can save 10 percent on any item through Sept. 8, 2020 with promotion code 10GSStyle.

Today there are 2.5 million Girl Scouts, consisting of 1.7 million youth members and 750,000 adults working mostly as volunteers.



A look from the new Girl Scouts uniform, designed by FIT students.



Lilac chambray shirt dress designed by FIT students.