



gwen's girls

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### **Gwen's Girls receives \$23,000 grant from Duquesne Light**

Duquesne Light has awarded Gwen's Girls a \$23,000 grant to support career exploration and workforce readiness programming for at-risk girls.

"Youth living in urban neighborhoods are far less likely to receive work readiness training and professional work experiences than youth in more affluent, suburban areas," said Lynn Knezevich, executive director of Gwen's Girls. "Through our work readiness program, we not only teach girls how to find and maintain a job, but also allow them to explore potential careers through workplace tours, job shadowing and career mentoring. These experiences are life changing for a girl who may have never considered a professional career as a viable option."

The Gwen's Girls work readiness program was established in 2009 to provide career exploration to girls ages 15 to 18 in the Pittsburgh region. During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, participants toured 14 workplaces and were exposed to career speakers in professional fields that included healthcare, law, finance, art, STEM and entrepreneurship. Last year, we also matched girls with work experiences at several local employment sites, including Chipotle, Gabriel Brothers, the Boys and Girls Club, KFC and the Frick Art Museum.

With funds provided by Duquesne Light, Gwen's Girls will expand programming to serve 40 girls in high poverty, high crime communities in Allegheny County.

#### ***About Gwen's Girls***

*Founded in 2002 by the late Gwen Elliott, Gwen's Girls empowers young girls to lead productive lives by providing them with holistic, gender-specific programs, education and experiences. As one of the few agencies in the nation focused on gender-specific programming for girls, Gwen's Girls provides a continuum of programs specifically designed to address the "whole" girl, including prevention, residential, foster care, and school-based and community-based programs and services. Gwen's Girls' programs have impacted the lives of more than 2,500 girls in the past 13 years, helping girls to achieve a new destiny for themselves and maximizing the potential of our communities. Learn more about Gwen's Girls at [www.gwensgirls.org](http://www.gwensgirls.org).*

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