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Engineer makes difference in local girls' lives

Giving back to the community is an important part of citizenship and Angela Casablanca, a project manager in New Generation, takes it seriously. She demonstrates this belief through volunteering for Girls Inc., a United Way agency.

"Girls Inc. inspires girls to be strong, smart and bold. It's an amazing organization – full of inspiring, great people who wish to make a difference in their communities. I'd encourage anyone to join us," Casablanca said.

Since 1938, Girls Inc. of



Angela Casablanca enjoys a day with some of the girls at the Crestwood Center.

Central Alabama (formerly Girls Club Inc. of Birmingham) has provided places and programs where school-age girls of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds participate in wholesome activities while learning life skills. The agency partners with elementary, middle and high schools within a five-county region to offer school-age girls between 6 and 18 years old two year-round programs, including both after-school and summer curricula. The research-based programs focus on health and wellness, economic literacy and career preparedness.

"When I moved to Birmingham from Atlanta 3 years ago, I wanted to get involved with the local community," Casablanca said. "A friend told me about Girls Inc., and it seemed to be a perfect fit – professional, working women guiding young girls in life skills. I was intrigued by what she shared and impressed once I attended a meeting."

"Volunteering for this organization has enriched my life on many levels," Casablanca said. "I've made new friends across generations, but it's been a particular blessing to show these girls how much fun math and science can be. We



Girl's Bill of Rights


- Girls have the right to:
- Be themselves and to resist gender stereotypes.
 - Express themselves with originality and enthusiasm.
 - Take risks, to strive freely and to take pride in success.
 - Accept and appreciate their bodies.
 - Have confidence in themselves and to be safe in the world.

After School and Summer Programs

- Career Development
- Economic Literacy
- English
- Life Skills
- Science, Math and Technology
- Cooking and Sewing
- Sports

Outreach Programs

- Health and Wellness
- Life Skills
- Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy
- Substance and Alcohol Abuse Prevention
- Career Opportunities Exposure



live in a culture that subtly implies young women aren't capable in math and science. This just isn't true, and as an engineer, I look at it as my duty to show young women what they can do in these fields."

"One of the biggest treats is observing how interactive these girls are," Casablanca said. "The first time I gave a presentation I remember being just a bit intimidated, but it was amazing to hear their questions and listen to their comments. Every single time I speak before one of these groups, the girls give me their full attention. They're young, so they are interested in pop culture as much as any child, but they are also interested in the future, and it's a pleasure to see how excited they get about their possibilities."

In addition to volunteering with these promising students, Casablanca also serves on the service organization's board of directors. The board oversees policies; determines goals and long-range plans; obtains, maintains and administers finances; and supports and promotes Girls Inc. She has also had the opportunity to serve as co-chair and chair for the Celebration Luncheon, usually attended by more than 500 volunteers, students and financial supporters, for the past 2 years. The Celebration Luncheon is coming up Aug. 6 at The Club; tickets can be purchased on the [Girls Inc. Web site](#).

"From co-chairing a major fundraiser to interacting with girls as part of a career panel, Angela consistently demonstrates her support of the mission of Girls Inc. and the young women we serve," said Terry Stalker, fellow board member. "She can be counted on to willingly volunteer and apply her talents to the most needed tasks. We all benefit from her attitude, expertise and commitment."

Casablanca looks forward to this summer when she plans to concentrate on career development with teenagers.

"It's going to be a great summer," Casablanca said. "Career development for young women has become a passion for me, and this gives me an opportunity to do something about it."

Nearly 7,000 Birmingham-area girls benefitted from the agency's services in 2008. When you consider the average girl participates in Girls Inc. for 7 years, you see how many lives you affect by supporting this agency.

For more information, visit <http://www.girlsinccentral-al.org/index.php>

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