

Event brings teens, role models together

Powerful Women Summit focuses on career options

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Mary Catherine Pflug isn't sure exactly what she wants to do when she graduates from high school, but one thing is for certain. The 15-year-old is equipped with the confidence and drive to back up whatever career she chooses.



Allen

That's due, in part, to her experience last year at the annual Powerful Women Summit presented by the Girl Scouts of South Carolina-Mountains to Midlands Inc. There she met local professional women who work in business, medicine, the arts, communications and education.



Picklesimer

"They are so inspiring," said Pflug, a 10th grader at Dorman High School. "Sometimes their life stories are more interesting than their careers. You get to connect with the women on a personal basis. It's a fun event."



Ruiz

Pflug also plans to attend this year's summit Jan. 30 at the Greenville Marriott. The third annual event is open to girls in the eighth grade and

up, whether or not they're members of a Girl Scout troop. "We serve all girls," said Jean Shew, an event coordinator and Girl Scout volunteer.

It's about helping girls grow into women of courage, confidence and character, said Susan Schneider, spokeswoman for the Mountains to Midlands chapter. "The goal is to inspire girls to leadership positions and to encourage them to begin creating a plan to achieve their dreams," she said.

There's a good cross section of women at the event, Shew said. "And they don't have to be a CEO or CFO of a company to be powerful. A lot of them are involved in community service. So these are great examples."

Up to 120 teenage girls will get the chance to meet and chat with accomplished women, primarily from the Greenville area. The event will include

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YOU CAN GO

- What: Powerful Women Summit presented by the Girl Scouts of South Carolina — Mountains to Midlands Inc.
- When: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Jan. 30
- Where: Greenville Marriott
- Cost: \$13, includes brunch; financial assistance available for qualified applicants
- For more: 800-849-4475 or www.gssc-mm.org

WOMEN

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roundtable discussions with a variety of selected professionals, along with Q&A sessions, brunch and door prizes.

At the summit, the women will move from table to table. The girls will be able to ask them questions about their careers and lives. "This is no lecture," Shew said. "It's very open. This is a free-for-all with women who will answer pretty much any question.

They share these great stories. They have a sense of humor."

This year's panelists include Heidi Aiken, WFBC B93.7 radio personality; architect Cindy Benjamin, associate at Neal Prince Architects; Zandra Johnson, attorney at Smith Moore Leatherwood LLP; Victoria Moore, executive chef at The Lazy Goat; Heather Nix, co-director of Clean Air & Water for Upstate Forever; Dr. Deborah Perzak, veterinary surgeon and owner of WoodRUFF Road Animal Hospital; Dr. Amy Picklesimer, OB/

GYN, maternal fetal medicine specialist; Megan Riegel, president, Peace Center for the Performing Arts; Sarah Robinson, test driver and equipment engineer, Michelin North America; Myra Ruiz, reporter for WYFF TV 4; Mary Ann Sudnick, fashion buyer and owner of Mariani's Boutique; Mary Thomas, executive vice president, Spartanburg County Foundation; Dr. Candy Tsaio, chemistry lab manager at Michelin North America; and City of Greenville Police Chief Terri Wilfong.