

Girls Inc. of Omaha Florida Trip 2018



Itinerary

Day 1 & 2 – Bus ride to Florida

Day 3 – Universal Studios & Magic Kingdom

Day 4 – Kennedy Space Center and Coco Beach

Day 5 – Boggy Creek Airboat Ride & Epcot

Day 6 – Drive to Atlanta

Day 7 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and CNN and Coca-Cola World

Day 8 – Birmingham Civil Rights Institute & 16th St. Church

Day 9 – National Civil Rights Institute (Motel Lorraine, Memphis) & City Museum (St. Louis)

Day 10 – drive home

Gallery of Journal Doodles

May 25, 26 Day 1 & 2 – Bus ride to Florida



Here we are again on another wonderful trip. Arriving at Girls Inc. yesterday I was so ready for departure. I was so happy to see familiar faces from the last trip. In my head I was saying, “Oh, this is about to be a great trip.” Once we got on the bus I was having conversations with friends, catching up on everything. It didn’t even take 20 minutes until I was knocked out. I want to thank staff that are on the trip with us. These staff put up with us every year and they still always make the time to come back. Thank you, BEAUTIFUL women, for tagging along on another adventurous trip. – Ra’Quel

Another year, another trip! I’ve been counting down for Florida so much I literally couldn’t wait. I’m thankful for all the sponsors and donors and Girls Inc. for letting me come on this trip. I’m always up for fun and new adventures. I’m super excited to see what...awaits us...I’m open to try new things and make new friends and have a blast which I know will happen. Let’s not even talk about hotels because I know how that’s going to go! This trip I tried something different which was sitting by someone other than my blood sisters or people I’m with on the daily. So, I sat with my Girls Inc. sister Ariyah. We had a lot to catch up on and I enjoy sitting with her. This will definitely be my trip buddy. – Famo

I knew that coming on this trip would create new memories. Girls Inc. trips are something every young lady should experience if they can. You get a chance to meet new girls, travel, and have fun (plus educate yourself). - Ariyah



It's been a long time coming for this trip. I've been counting down the days that I would return to a bus full of personalities eager to see the world...When I arrived to the Center this afternoon, I couldn't hide my smile. I saw girls with their hair wrapped and with their slides on. Something you'll notice while traveling with us is that the majority of us get our hair braided. Braids, braids, braids.... When we pulled off from the Center the bus was full of energy, singing, talking. – Desy

First, I want to say how happy I am to be with my girls on this trip to Florida. Y'all don't understand how happy I was. I packed like two weeks before the trip. - Hinde

I have been waiting for this very moment and it's finally here! I was so excited the whole school day Friday, but I had to remain calm because I had 3 finals to go through. - Jamia

And our journey begins! This trip is a little different from the others. We are driving all night long. But that doesn't bother me. I absolutely love road trips. - Aariona

It was a slow start, but we survived. It was a slow start because we had to load a lot of food. It took us at least 30 minutes. Then we had to load our luggage that goes under the bus. That took 15 minutes. Then we had to pray. That took 3 minutes. Finally, we loaded everyone on the really nice Arrow Stage Lines Bus. There was a lot of people so we had to make more room. I thought some people were going to have to stay back and go home. It didn't go that way. We made room. Now we are on the road. Florida here we come! - Haunnah

I am already so excited and we haven't made it out of Omaha, Nebraska! - Lacy

We got in a big circle to pray for a safe trip. Once we got done praying we all took a seat on the bus with our buddies. I knew it was going to be a long ride so I got comfortable and ready for the ride. - Arianna

To be honest, I've never been out of the state. I've always wanted to go to ATL, Georgia. Now I can see it. - Ebony

I'm going to have fun. - Makayla

It may be my first trip with half these girls but that's not going to stop me from getting to know new girls. I want to take this time to thank the people that made this trip possible for me. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be here. It's nice to see Ms. Sheebie again. It's been awhile since the last time I saw her at the Malala event. It was great to see her there and then seeing her on the trip with the girls again - it's great. - Habiba

Starting this trip was very crazy - packing things and getting a lot of help from everyone because teamwork makes the dream work. - Asnina

Starting this trip, I wasn't sure what to expect since it would be my first time leaving the state. We've been driving for what seems like days but it has only been hours. The views outside the windows are what keep us entertained. Without having any cellular devices, you start to realize the little things in life, like the wildlife and how beautiful the mountains are when looked at directly instead of through a phone screen. It was refreshing to see the Mississippi River and to know that it actually exists...It's fun to watch all the movies on the bus but I could really use a bed right about now. These seats aren't the most comfortable seats. - Asha

I couldn't get comfortable. - Mariah





My favorite thing so far is my water canteen. The color of it is beautiful and it has my name on it – double plus. – Taylor B.

Before I forget, I want to thank Ms. Sheebie for our bottles. Her doing that made me know that her love is real. - Nicoletta

I want to thank Ms. Sheebie for the water bottle because now I can use this for my sports in the summer. And I like how our names are carved in. Thank you. – Taylor M.

The lights are very cool on this new upgraded bus. The seats may not be the most comfortable but as to the bus drivers, shout out to them. They deal with everything we do and they communicate well with us. So big shout out to them. – Famo

Everyone was rushing to find a seat to sit by their friends or sit in the back. As we are settled in and starting the bus, you can see kids getting sleepy. – Asnina

I'll admit the bus is kind of crammed together. – Taylor B.

It was very cold and uncomfortable on the bus. - Araya

Our day started out cramped, more cramped than I thought. Our feet swelled, too and I didn't know that happens. - Sakira

The bus ride was pretty packed & annoying but fun @ the same time. Me and the girls were singing, playing hand games. OMG we were all mostly tired. My head was hurting so bad because my braids. I barely got any sleep but I made it through. Ms. CT was talking about "smile" and I was like umm maybe when we finally get there but I really didn't say that... 😊. I just faked it til I made it. - Hinde

I am enjoying every moment when I am not asleep – talking to the girls surrounding me, watching the interesting movies, and eating snacks. But what I enjoy the most is the scenery! As we stopped in St. Joseph and pulled into the park I was amazed at how beautiful it was – the manmade water fall, the fountain, and the ducks and animals. - Somer

I'm on the bus and I'm kinda bored. I am real hungry but we are gonna stop to have a picnic in the park... We just go back from dinner. We had chicken, salad, and watermelon. It tasted real good. Then we discovered a wasp's nest. My friend started to get scared because she hates bugs. – Nora

We made it all the way to Missouri and we stopped for dinner. We ate chicken, potato salad, pickles and fruit. – Taylor M.

We stopped for dinner. The cherries were so good. – Vic'Taijah

We got on the bus and got settle in. Me and Jazzy played some cards, then colored. Later I got a headache because I forgot my glasses... I am glad I get to go on this trip and meet knew people. – Angel

We were on the road to our destination, Florida. We passed through different states and all the states were unique and beautiful in their own way. Tennessee was a really beautiful state. It had beautiful mountains and tall trees surrounded by water. The view was breathtaking. - Fartunay

I'm looking forward to many things on this trip. I don't want to think about Omaha and all the problems I left behind. I just want peace & fun. It's my time so I'm going to make it the best. – Famo

For every trip I would go on my mom would tell me, "Travel while you're young and able. Don't worry about the money. Just make it work. Experience is far more valuable than money will ever be." I believed her and took it to heart. Trips may cost money but we are always traveling to learn new things and see the world. - Habiba

I now have a newly found gratitude for bus drivers. As he was driving into the park, he got in a jam and had to get out so he reversed out of there. – Nora

7:40 p.m. we arrived at Krug Park. The driver pulled into Krug Park and when we got to the top of the hill, the driver says he "has to go backwards" cause he can't get up all the way. My seat buddy next to me was freaking out and closing her eyes...I was impressed with his ability to backup because it's bigger than a yellow school bus. – Lacy

It's a really long drive, but I'm enjoying just sitting her talking to my friends and watching movies. – Jaiya

One of the girls has asked to stop at a drug store to pick up a toothbrush. She brought one but it's the one for her edges and not the one for her teeth. – Ms. Roberta

I woke up and the bus is so peaceful. Everyone is asleep but the world outside the bus is wide awake...I had a dream that we had a female bus driver. I was so amazed. Guess what?! I woke up in Tennessee to an African American female bus driver. I wanted to hug her so bad but I just said, "Hi." I think it would have been kinds of weird for me to hug her. Right now, we are driving through the Appalachian Mountains with funky breath and oily faces. – Desy

Today I woke up to swollen feet and legs. And so did my friend Anisea...I didn't sleep that well either. I have all sorts of pain throughout my body. I got bit by a couple of bugs. - Liberty

Sleeping in a bus is very uncomfortable. I slept restlessly. My neck and back hurts. I never got in a comfortable position. – Haunnah

It wasn't my best sleep. My neck hurt from sleeping wrong. - Asia

The movies were all good. I mostly liked **Hidden Figures**. It showed that colored people are strong, smart, and bold and whatever anyone can do, we can do it, too. Just got to keep pushing ourselves for the better. – Asnina

My first time seeing **Hidden Figures**. – Ebony





It was a good, interesting movie. It was based on true events like the space race during the Cold War and the civil right movement. I love history. Especially U.S. history. - Haunnah

We put on a movie about the bombings in Birmingham. I enjoyed it. - Nora

We also watched a documentary about the 4 little girls in Birmingham, Alabama. That movie was one of the best movies we watched the whole ride. – Mariah

We started watching a documentary about the 4 little girls in the church bombing. It was kind of hard to see the parents talking about their children because it makes me know that it's hard for mothers to know that their child is in danger and their child is dead. I know that my mom would be devastated. – Taylor M.

I want to thank the donors and Girls Inc. for letting me go. Every trip I go, it's always a blast and fun. I learn a lot of new things and meet a lot of cool and new people. – Asnina

We stopped for breakfast at McDonald's. I got hash browns and some orange juice. – Nora

We stopped at McDonald's to get breakfast. On the way back to the bus I saw this lady walking a cat on a leash. - Desy

So, we are still on the bus and I'm hungry but I'm always hungry. – Angel

I always felt so hungry on the bus but I didn't want to overeat because I knew it could make me sick. - Mariah

I'm real hungry because it's 2:00 and we haven't even had lunch! – Nora

It's going to take 3 hours to get to the hotel. I'm just going back to sleep... - Makayla



Our journey has been long and tiresome. We have had a couple of driver changes and I am glad we got Mr. Absalom for the 3rd time. He is a wonderful driver. Especially since he puts up with all of us crazy girls...I am ready to be off the bus and in a nice and comfortable hotel room!!! – Aariona

I just found out that my seat reclines!!! NOW I am comfortable. Thankfully the girl who sits behind me doesn't mind if I recline. - Lacy

When we started the bus ride I thought it would be fast but I thought wrong. – Caroline

Before I was off to Florida, my mom (Foster mom) said that she doesn't want me to go because I can't follow directions. She's right about that. I have trouble following directions and rules. But I'm glad she let me ho on this amazing trip. She trusts me enough to go on this trip and follow directions/rules. Thank you, mom! Now we have expectations/rules for this trip. Never go alone. Always have a buddy. Follow directions (obvious). No back talk (obviously). That's it for now. - Haunnah

I've been her so long that it kinda feels like home now. Like a very cramped camper that 42 girls are in. – Nora

I now have a newly found appreciation for bus drivers. Our bus driver is nice and puts up with everything. The actual bus ride is boring. It is 8:05 pm and we haven't had dinner yet. We have been to 3 parks and we couldn't eat at any of them...I am so excited to get to Florida. I could really use a tan...We just got the talk about hotel rules. I am excited to sleep in a bed! Universal has been a dream place for me to go because I absolutely love Harry Potter. I am also excited to go see Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks things. Another thing I want to do at the hotel is swim. – Liz

We woke up and it was dinner time. We sat with a girl named Hinde and her friends. I am enjoying the trip so far and everyone is really nice. - Jazlyn

We have all been on this bus for about two days. It has been a real struggle. I have been turning and trying to find comfortable ways to sleep. So far, I have met two girls already – Angel & Jazlyn. They are nice and helpful. - Ariyah

Towards the time to arrive at the hotel, the whole bus started singing songs together, vibing with one another, making use of our time we had left. – Jamia

Yeah! We're getting closer and closer to Florida! – Lacy

I'm ready to have fun!! - Araya

Now we're in Florida. Yay...Time to hit the sack. – Vic'Taijah

Dear Journal, We are finally in Florida at the hotel and tomorrow the real fun begins. – Kami

Asia locked the key to her suitcase in her suitcase. Ms. CT broke into it with a foot file. – Ms. Roberta



May 27, Day 3 – Magic Kingdom & Universal Studios



We woke up at 7:15 a.m. That was so early. We went to breakfast and I ate some Cinnabons that were so good. - Mariah

Today's breakfast was good. It filled me up. – Angel

I had a bagel, cinnamon roll, and sausage. – Jazlyn

The pancakes were good. - Ariyah

Today we started off our day to a good start because we went downstairs and ate a very good breakfast. - Arianna

Having to set our alarms early and wake ourselves up for breakfast is something I never have to do because my mom wakes me up. This trip has taught me a lot about responsibility and keeping organized. - Asha

I want to start this journal by thanking Ariyah for coming to wake us up this morning. Our alarm wasn't set right but she came to make sure we were up... The breakfast was amazing. – Ra'Quel

I woke up to Famo yelling at me. Famo and I don't usually argue but this morning...we was just a fussing. It all started because it wasn't 8 a.m. and Famo wanted me to wake up and get ready. OMG, we spent like 5 minutes straight going back and forth. - Desy

I really wanna go swimming tonight because we missed it last night. We got there at 11:00 pm and were in our rooms at around 11:30 pm. The pool was closed but my hotel people that I am rooming with are lots of fun! - Nora

So, after getting off the bus late and showering, made it very hard to wake up this morning. But I enjoyed my breakfast. It was kind of hard because I gave up pork for my health and I could not eat any pork sausage... For the first time, I ate turkey sausage and it was actually tasty. – Taylor B.

We went to Disney World and Universal Studios and it turned out to be so much fun. – Kami

When we got to Universal Studios Angel and I joined Hinde and her group. We rode the Hulk which is a roller-coaster that goes upside down and super-fast. It was fun. I had gotten nervous about the ride for no reason. My favorite ride has to be the Amazing Spiderman ride. It was 3-D. You could feel the heat/water on you. We were all screaming and laughing. I give a big thanks to all the staff members for bringing us here. - Jazlyn

Everything was cool. – Ebony

We didn't get to go around the whole park but it was one of the best times of my life.
– Alaijah

I was so excited to be with my friends and go to cool things and rides. – Arianna

I rode all the rides I could possibly see. It was so exciting. I got soaking wet on one of them and the rides mostly scared me but I always get right back on. - Hinde

It was a lot of walking but I got to really talk to my friends about my school year and what we want to do this summer. And we took a lot of pictures. I thought it was going to be a lot of drama but so far everything is going good. – Anisea



My group went to the World of Harry Potter first. - Lacy

I went on this Harry Potter ride. The line was an hour long but it was worth it, though. – Haunnah

We went on 4 rides and the lines were long so we patiently waited. This was my first time coming to a big amusement park and I am very impressed. – Jamia

We were in lines for at least 40 minutes. We stopped after we got done with our rides and got CHURROS! Best memory somebody could ask for!! - Araya

We got on this huge rollercoaster. I screamed the whole time. My stomach kept dropping. – Kendra

The park was everything I expected – teaching us time and money management. Other than my feet being on kill, everything else was good. - Nicoletta

When we arrived at Universal it was cloudy and humid. The first thing that was interesting was you had to scan your pointer finger to get in the park. The first ride I went on was red, called Rip Rocket. Now I see why it was red because I should have stayed away. The ride started off nice and smooth...fast and to the point. The ride was extremely cool because you could pick a song and listen to it while riding. That's not the point. Anyways, we got stuck. YUP. We were stuck clear at the top of the ride right before it drops. I wasn't scared, but I was scared...! – Desy

The first ride I went on was the Rip Rocket. Luckily Jamia was willing to be my partner. Everything was going fine. The line went quickly. It just so happened we got stuck at the top of the rollercoaster. My heart was pounding and the fact that only six of us Girls Inc. girls alone up on this rollercoaster that's supposed to be moving right about now but wasn't really had me nervous. It felt like it took forever for the ride to start up again but in reality, it only took three mins. – Ariyah

The highlight of my day was first being stuck on the Rip Rocket Roller Coaster. Desy and I were on the front of the car. Somehow, I knew we were going to get stuck but I didn't say anything. I didn't want to jinx us. - Sakira

I had an astounding time on every ride: Rip Ride Rocket, The Mummy, Transformers. ...If I had to rate the rides I would put Rip Ride Rocket first because I have never experienced a rollercoaster as such. Every drop took my breath away and sent my stomach into my throat! That is why we decided to ride it twice...My least favorite ride is the Transformer. Though I am a fan of the movie, the ride nearly gave me whiplash. - Somer



I was a chicken and was scared to go on the first roller coaster. I was glad that Kaionna didn't go on the roller coaster and she sat with me and had me laughing. – Ra'Quel

Every time we got off the rides we ran to look at the pictures. – Vic'Taijah

The Hulk Roller Coaster was the first roller coaster I ever rode. Because of my phobia of heights, I've always avoided them but because we are at Disney World and it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity - which I'm thankful for Girls Inc. making possible - I decided that I'd finally face my fear and ride a roller coaster. – Asha

I was scared at first but then I got used to it. We sat in our seats. It was me, Liberty, Anisea, & Taylor. There was 4 in a row. At first it went slow then half way through the starting point, it went really fast. It went upside down, it twisted, and had big drops. – Jaiya

Let's start off by saying I don't even like roller coasters because of the heights and just because of how dangerous they are. But guess what? You only live once and today I took that to heart. Today I went on killer rides. I had the time of my life...mission accomplished. From today forward my friends showed me that I shouldn't be scared to get on a roller coaster. - Fatuma

The second time we rode the Mummy ride I didn't think we were going to be scared but we were. – Vic'Taijah

Today it was raining on and off. Everyone in my group was wet. - Tamia

Even though it rained a lot, it didn't stop the fun. – Aariona

Universal Studios was fun even though we had our ups and downs. Like we went to King Kong Island and they thought we had their [3D] glasses and they checked our bags and were being mean about it,



saying, "If you have it we're calling security." Come to find out, we never took them. We put them in the trash like we were supposed to. Happily, we walked out peacefully and went back to having fun. – Anillia

My group was stopped for "stealing" some ugly 3D glasses from the ride. And we were stopped for at least 5 min. about the glasses. - Caroline

The first ride I got on at Universal was this little cup ride. The only reason I got on it was because Habiba and Fartunay said it wasn't all that. But the second we got on it was the Hulk Coaster. OMG! When I tell you it was scary, like as I was waiting in line I old

already tell it was going to be scary. The minute Habiba, Fartunay, and I sat down we started screaming and we weren't even buckled up yet... I was scared for my life. When it zoomed down, I thought my soul was taken. I screamed "Mom!" that whole time. Oh year, #1 rule: never get on a ride with Fartunay. She pulled on my shirt and hoops the whole time. But I had fun and wish to come back. – Asnina

The rollercoasters were so scary. Thanks to my friends – they pushed me to try new things and try at least one ride. At the end, I rode a total of 5 rides which I loved and enjoyed. If it wasn't for Girls Inc., I wouldn't be able to experience any of this. I am extremely grateful and thankful for this opportunity. As Walt Disney says, "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them." - Fartunay

We got to see an acapella group! I never saw one perform in person and it reminded me of **Pitch Perfect**. - Desy

Universal Studios was awesome! I went to Harry Potter World with Haunnah, Lacy, Nora and me. Nora and I got wands. We got to make things move when we waved them at books... Everything was overpriced. - Liz

My first ride was Hulk. I thought I would never go on but I did. – Angel

I saw Shrek. I love him so much. Donkey was like, "Y'all from Omaha< Nebraska? They got good steak there." He also said, "Oh, y'all with Girls Wink." That was funny. – Vic'Taijah

The ride I really enjoyed the most was the Hulk because while we were waiting in line it really felt like you were in the lab and a lot of things were going on. I also liked when we went upside down and spun around over the water. – Taylor M.



My first ride I went on was called The Mummy and it was super fun and had a lot of unexpected events that occurred. Me and my best friends Ariyah and Jamia went and I had ice cream at Cold Stone. I swear I love these two beautiful people I call friends. They had me laughing every second... - Ra'Quel

The group I was in, we made a pact that if more than three people want to go on the roller coaster then everyone has to go on it... They were fun and scary. – Tamia

I made 2 new friends on this trip. This trip helped me get to know others more. My goal by the end of this trip is to make more friends. - Lacy

The ride started when we were settled. There was a huge shoot out with the Hulk yelling like he was throwing us. We went up, down, upside down, left, right but it was a quick ride. - Liberty

At [Universal] we went on a Harry Potter ride where smoke and dragons were everywhere. Then we went on a more slow trolley ride through Dr. Seuss land and finally we went on a Spiderman ride where they used actual fire! I got myself a wand at Ollivander's wand shop and I got some ice cream. So far, the day is going good. - Nora

I was super excited to get on the Rip, Ride, Rockit. Going up the ride was scary but the first drop I thought I was done for. - Taylor

I liked hanging with new and different girls. It was great. – Asnina

This trip has also taught me how to finance and save my money, which is really helpful in the real world. - Asha

I made new friends...they are really nice and welcomed me. – Angel





[At Disney], we were given \$35 to get lunch and dinner on our own at the park. I was annoyed that I spent \$20 for a small thing of nachos and a lemonade slushie. Like, why? – Desy

And the food here is so great. I wish Omaha had stuff like this. – Anisea

When we got to Disney World, Magic Kingdom, Angel and I went and got chili dogs and fries for lunch. Once we finished eating we walked around and eventually rode a ride called “Under the Sea.” The line was really long. After that ride we rode “Haunted Mansion.” – Jazlyn

OMG, so girl, tell me why I got on the Haunted ride thing even though I’m terrified of haunted scary things? But anyway, I want to sue them because OMG Disney that’s the best scary haunted ride you can make. I was covering my eyes and everything waiting for something to pop out and grab me or something...- Hinde

I went go cart riding and took lots of photos and the food was good...Overall, I had a blast. I could go on and on but that’s so much writing. - Ariyah

The best part of Disneyworld is that it makes you feel young again. – Habiba



We went to Magic Kingdom. It was big and hard to get on rides. – Kendra

My favorite ride at Disney was the Space Mountain. You sat in a rocket with three people and a row and you go through a black room that looks like you're in space and it had stars and a moon. You would pass by other people and they made it as realistic as possible. – Taylor M.

We had so much fun. - Annielia

My favorite ride was Space Mountain; it was really dark but amazing. – Taylor B.

We got to take a picture with Shrek and Donkey. – Ra'Quel

Lacy and I went on this Haunted Mansion tour. It wasn't very scary but our "ghost tour guide" told us we would bring a ghost home with us. I guess our hotel is in trouble. – Liz

We got on Splash Mountain which is funny because none of us wanted to get wet. Even though the ride was literally called SPLASH MOUNTAIN. It felt like all the rides after that took forever to wait in line and to ride. - Desy

Today while we were waiting for the Castle Fireworks show to begin, Fatuma, Hinde, Asha and I met a South African-American teenager named Demi. She was on a trip with a group from her school when we bumped into her. She was so friendly and kind that we ended sitting together while waiting. From Demi, I learned that South Africa is a beautiful country that is more domestic than people put it up for. "There are many great schools in the cities within it and people should look more into the country," she said. Demi was not only sophisticated but confident and I thought she looked stunning. She remained proud of her birthplace and taught me a lot about it. – Famo

The thing about today was people would be speaking different languages. It was cool and different, but different in a good way. - Angel



I went on more scary rides...with the help of my sisters and friends. I got on knowing that I'll be alright while they are on the crazy rides along beside me. - Habiba

I bought some silver Minnie Mouse ears to match my inner sparkle. - Aariona

The most thing I loved about Disney World was the fireworks. I almost bawled in tears. I was such a child, screaming and naming all the Disney movies and princesses. I loved singing to their songs. That was amazing and when I get home

I'm going to brag to everybody because that was beautiful and we don't really have anything like that.
– Asnina

While I was watching the fireworks show, I was thinking about lots of things at once but they had said this one quote: "Believe in yourself and you can do unbelievable things" and that really hit me hard because each and every day all I think about is where am I going to go and what am I going to do in life? - Fatuma

The fireworks show was AMAZING! They were projecting pictures of Disney characters on the castle as the fireworks were booming. The whole thing was loud but cool. Then a person dressed as Tinkerbell flew overhead. I'm assuming that they were on wires and that it was kind like a zip line. I also bought some plain black Mickey Mouse ears. Most people were asking why I got the most plain ones. It's because I don't think you need a lot of pizzazz and sparkles to make something special. Or at least that's what my mom is always saying. - Nora

We just watched the fireworks. It was so pretty. The best part of the trip is when you are with your friends because I was with my friends the whole time. – Makayla

I just watched the fireworks and they were so beautiful and emotional! Being with your friends is the best part of this trip. - Araya

My absolute favorite part of the show was seeing the firework show. The show was gorgeous, all the unique colors and patterns in the sky. I loved the different Disney movie scenes that appeared on the royal castle. Today was just a good day and I can't wait to see the adventures for tomorrow. – Ra'Quel

Later that night there was the night show with fireworks and it made me tear up because it made me feel like I have accomplished something. That I made my grandma happy/proud. My grandma





passed away three years ago when I was in the 6th grade and I love and miss her so much. I did a good thing and I am glad I got a chance to go on this trip. – Angel

The fireworks were so beautiful and colorful, my mind was blown from the crazy fireworks. The crowd was amazing. It made me feel like I was around my friends and family, not strangers. The best part about coming to Disneyland is that it makes you feel so young and brings back childhood Disney movies we loved. My favorite Disney character is Moana. – Fartunay

It was really good to see everyone with smiles on their faces and people gasping when they hear the fireworks. The music and the projection going on gave me chills because when I was younger I always saw the advertisement for Disney World and I've always wanted to go and now I was there seeing all the action. – Taylor M.

The best part was the end when it was the fireworks show. I nearly cried watching that amazing show. - Jamia

We just got back from Disney and it was really cool! Haunah and I had hotdogs for lunch/dinner and we went on so many rides including one called It's a Small World and it was kind scary. We also went on the spinning tea cups. That was fun but sadly my card [Disney and Epcot pass] flew out. Luckily, we were able to get a new one. Today I learned that honesty is one of the best policies. – Nora

This was my first time at Disney World and I loved it. I had so much fun and we had fast passes. I love this trip! - Anisea

Disney has been a success and my childhood dream has finally become a reality! – Asha

I had a blast today and can't wait for more adventures to come. – Asnina

I can still argue that Universal Studios is better than Disney World when it comes to the rides and fun. Disney is all about the gift shops and the magical land. When I saw the Welcome to Disney sign I'm thinking its going to be around the corner. The place is so special and magical it's hidden. The shows, the lights, the people – I love it all...The most important thing about today is seeing my little sister Famo having the time of her life. I know I completed that mission when she cried at the end. There is nothing better than seeing your little sibling happy. – Fatuma

The fireworks were spectacular and very storytelling. My little sister Famo even cried. I don't really understand why but everybody has their own little imaginative story in their mind. - Hinde

I have been hanging out with some girls that are outside my normal clique. We realized that they are some pretty cool girls. – Aariona

We had a great time sitting, relaxing, and laughing and having the best time of our lives. Me, Ariyah, and Ra'Quel had our own adventure together. - Jamia

Anyway, today was the best day even though I got my card stolen. I got a new one (lesson of the day – be more responsible). – Annielia

One of the girls (not Mariah) vomited today. I don't think she's sick. I think (just maybe) it's junk food combined with upside-down roller coasters. – Ms. Roberta

It's 11 p.m. and we are still waiting on some girls who didn't make it to the meeting spot on time. I am ready to go! – Desy

A couple of girls were still inside so the staff went back to find them. Some, well many, of us were mad and tired of waiting but we still had patience and so did the bus driver. While [we waited] I talked to some friends and also my new friend Elizabeth. – Arianna

I must not have heard the staff because we were 2 hours late to the bus. I am sincerely sorry to the girls, staff, and bus driver for being late and irresponsible and I know they're upset with us. I am so sorry. I knew something was wrong. My stomach kept turning but again I am sorry and I will do whatever it takes to try to improve my behavior. I will be more responsible and considerate of others. Hopefully the rest of the trip goes better than today but overall, I had a good time and it was very adventurous and we took lots of pictures but only rode like 3 rides due to the long waits. - Kendra

As you may know me and my friends had a hard time listening to instructions and caused big delay in our schedule. I am, as well as they are, truly sorry for the inconvenience I caused. Not only am I sorry for the bus driver but also to my fellow Girls Inc. sisters. Also, to the staff that took time to make sure that I got put on this trip when staff could have picked somebody else. It is a privilege to be on this trip and I am truly sorry – Taylor B.

I sincerely apologize for being inconsiderate and being two hours late and making all the others lose sleep because of my actions. U understand what I did was wrong and was not OK. I never wanted to make anyone upset with me in any kind of way, especially all the instructors. From now on I will be more responsible and make the rest of this trip better. And again, I sincerely apologize to everybody. – Kaionna

I am truly sorry for not arriving to the meeting spot on time. The guilt is taking a toll on me. It was truly a mistake as we thought we were leaving at 12:00 a.m. and took the time after the fireworks to wait in line for a ride. We were only aware that everyone was waiting for us after we got off the ride and were aware of the time limit we set for the whole trip and the sleep schedule of the driver. I know that what we did was wrong yet it hurts when we are called inconsiderate or ungrateful as we are neither. We are grateful for the trip. I know I am. I have seen all of the other four girls do considerate things for the other girls on the trip. Though what we did today was not acceptable and maybe to some unforgivable. I hope it won't reflect upon myself or any of the other girls. I am sorry. - Somer

All of us are locked out of our hotel room. All of us want to go to bed seeing as how it is midnight. – Liz

When we got back to our hotel room (After midnight...), none of the room keys worked. All of them had to be re-magnetized. – Ms. Roberta

May 28, Day 3 – Kennedy Space Center & Beach

We got in late last night. I went straight to the shower and to bed. I think that was the best sleep I have gotten in a week or two. – Desy

I took a shower and the water felt great. – Asia

I'm glad my friend who was in the same room as me had an alarm set, cause it woke me up. Also, on time for breakfast. I was the last one out the door so I cleaned up some of our mess. – Arianna

Today I got up and got ready and had breakfast. I was bummed because they didn't have the cinnamon bread thingy and they are really good. – Angel



I got dressed and woke up my room mates. After everyone was dressed we all headed down for breakfast as normal. It was great. After we ate we had to go clean our room. As we got upstairs I started to feel sick. I had felt bad the night before and I thought it had passed but when I got upstairs it started all over again. I was in the bathroom for 30 minutes. I only left because I didn't want to get yelled at like the girls last night and I was determined to get to the bus so I could push through it. I didn't want to ruin the museum for all the other girls. Later, on the bus I found out that other girls were sick, too. I thought it was crazy that all these people were sick, too. When we were riding Mariah got sick in the seat in front of me. We continued to go to the museum and all the other girls were sick and others were sore from our trip to Disney but we still persevered. – Asia

Another girl (not Mariah) vomited today. I don't think she's actually sick. She sits across from Mariah in the bus. I think it is sympathy vomiting. – Ms. Roberta





Today was pretty fun. The Space Center was a lot more fun than I thought it would be. I learned a lot of things. Like how early settlers didn't survive longer because they didn't have antibiotics or certain things they needed for their health. My favorite part was the slide... I also like the space shuttle ride, too. It really did feel real. It was shaking and everything! – Janaya

Unfortunately, we did not get to meet nor talk to the astronaut. - Ariyah

This museum goes on my list of great museums I've been to on the trips... I found this museum really fun because of all the interactive things. I find most museums boring because of the lack of things I can touch because I am a toucher. – Aariona

Did you know that Spain sold Florida in 1821 to the US for only \$5 million? - Hinde

President Kennedy said, "We don't do these things because they are easy, but because they are hard." It is a good quote for trying to make a rocket that can carry a human into space. - Haunnah

Today at Kennedy Space Center, I learned that NASA and Florida teamed up to save sea turtles. I also learned that Florida has survived many hurricanes but many ships haven't. – Asnina

This was interesting and I am willing to try new things. – Kendra

I am learning so many new things that a science textbook wouldn't be able to tell us. - Araya

The rockets are huge. I've never seen one up close. Only in the movies and on TV. – Ebony

Today I learned so many things such as how they made the shuttle so it could be reusable. Also, how they created more reusable things such as heat shields and rockets. Throughout the Space Center I saw some of the rockets and even one of the shuttles that were used during one of the missions. The part I enjoyed was the simulator that was about exiting earth's gravity which is $9.8/s^2$ and what types of pressure your body must go through. I didn't know how hard some astronauts have to train and the amount of experience they must have to qualify. - Caroline

We went in the 3D room and it was so cool because they made it so realistic. I felt like I was really there. My favorite part was the rocket shuttle. I honestly hate heights and that felt so real I didn't want to get on but I did and it wasn't even scary. – Kaionna

I really like Ariyah's pictures she took of me. I looked like a whole beautiful African Queen, which I am. I like how Ra'Quel kept reminding me to smile because sometimes I just have a natural angry face that even I forget about. - Hinde

Once we got there we went to the Hero's and Legends building and the Atlantis building. - Jazlyn



The museum was a good experience for me...It taught me about inspiration and helped me out to know who inspires me. The 3D screen kind of made my and Taylor's head hurt because of the motion. I got to talk to some new friends as I was walking around the exhibit. Me and my friends liked the presentations about the rockets ships and how they were made and launched. One of the astronauts at the exhibit had the same name as my grandpa. - Arianna

The technology is so advanced it's crazy. – Fatuma

I started to love learning about space things after today. - Fartunay

Every astronaut that went to space had to study to get to their goal. - Dahrma

Everyone is at the Space Center and there is an exhibit on early settlers. I am looking at one about child play. It says that children didn't have much and used their imaginations. There is a doll toy

and a little dress on display, too. The dress is pink with white polka dots. I would have probably worn something like that. – Liz

At the Space Center it was a shock to see actual pieces of space crafts. They were beautifully designed. The presentations were filled with lights and you always felt somewhat of a the real experience.... One thing that stuck with me is how it took the death of 3 Americans in space for the entire space program to make 1300 changes. You never really know the significance of something until you take the time to learn. Experiencing the rocket launch was really cool. - Desy

When the monitor was showing a video of people stating who they saw as their heroes it made me think about myself. What would I look for in a hero? What do I consider heroic? There are many different forms and sizes a her can be in and I believe that I have many people I could consider mine but they all have one thing alike: their persona. Most heroes are courageous, passionate and caring. All heroes strive to make a difference. Using all of those traits I think I would absolutely call Ms. Roberta one of my heroes. Not only has she known me since I was very young, but in all those years she's taught me a lot in life. She calls about all of us and is passionate about keeping us happy and safe. I have notice how hard it is trying to care for more than 40 girls... All that she does, as well as the other staff, is noticed. For that is say THANK YOU MY HEROES FOR WORKING HARD TO MAKE EVERYTHING SUCCESSFUL!! – Famo

Let me give you a short list on who inspires me:

- 1) My mother. My mother is a single woman. She always pushes me to my fullest.
- 2) Ms. Nichole. I met Ms. Nichole when I was only 4 and since then we just clicked. She's always on my behind about college and I mean always. Not only that but she also pushes me and for that, she is a 2nd mother for me. - Nicoletta



I like one of the videos that asked who our hero was. Well mine is my mom and my sister. Without them, I don't know what, where or who I want to be or where to go. I just want to say thank you. They taught me to never give up and to learn from failure and keep going until the goal is reached. - Hinde

The first video was touching, seeing what all of the kids are inspired by. That video made me think about who inspired me and who my hero is. I loved hearing about all of the astronauts that made a huge impact on people's lives. The second video we watched I learned about John Glenn and his flight to space. – Ra'Quel

A hero is defined by their character, what they do and how they do it. For example, Ms. CT. When things go wrong she is the first one to the scene to help or break up an argument on the fly. She undoubtedly is a real hero. No, she might not have laser vision or super strength but she does have passion and fighting spirit to do things right. - Asia

We saw the Space Shuttle Atlantis. – Kami

...If you continue walking down this path there is a life-sized version of Mercury Mission Control. – Liz

It was fun to come down the space shuttle today. It felt real – every second of it! – Habiba

I remember going to the SAC Museum and learning about the silicon tiles they use to build rockets because it's one of the only materials that can endure the heat that the engine gives off. This was stated in the presentation. - Sakira

It's amazing how much work goes into building the spaceships along with the courage and commitment of the astronauts. - Somer



We walked in the Hall of Fame of astronauts in space. There was this huge statue of this man names Alan B. Shepard, Jr. he was the first American in space. - Jamia

I didn't know about the shuttle named The Challenger that crashed and took seven lives along with it until today. It's crazy how the first African American and the first female to go into space were a part of that devastating crash. - Asha

My favorite part was the space shuttle slide. It was fast and fun. I also enjoyed the 3D video we watched at the beginning. It showed that heroes don't have to be super famous doctors or

athletes. They can be ordinary astronauts because they did something to contribute to the world. I also enjoyed the space shuttle simulator. The commentator was quite funny with his sneaky jokes. – Taylor B.

The Space Center is amazing... I loved getting on the rocket ride and felt for real like I was an astronaut today... But when they opened the top of the shuttle and we didn't have helmets on we would have been dead because we were in space and the top opened. It was fun and amazing. – Asnina

At the Kennedy Space Center, I learned a new word. Topography, which is the arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area. I enjoy learning new words and broadening my vocabulary. - Sakira

I never noticed before how many astronauts were women. It makes me confident because the job I want to do is computer programming which is a male dominated field. It strengthens me as a female programmer. – Taylor B.

The 3D presentation had a lot of cool effects that made it realistic, like how the room would get windy when the space shuttle took off. – Asha

I learned that the purposed of a shuttle was to blast off like a rocket but to land like an airplane. – Ariyah

As we got to maneuver around the different stations, there were little metal switches set on the walks and every time I walked up to one I just recited random stuff I head off of TV shows or movies like "Copy. Copy. We need double on the boosters" and "tighten up for landing" while I flip the switches up and down in random patterns. - Somer

We just got back from the Kennedy Space Center and it was a BLAST. I now have a new respect for astronauts because they risk their lives for our benefits. We got to watch awesome videos about astronauts and our world. I also got to learn a little bit about wildlife on earth. I git to go down and awesome slide and do a CRAZY shuttle simulator. I learned that sea turtles are extremely endangered and that there are a ton (4-5) of bald eagle nests around the space center. – Nora



It took 12 years to build the Atlantis. One special thing about the Atlantis was that it was built to travel more than once. – Taylor M.

Then we left the Kennedy Space Center and got on the bus. When we got on the bus I helped Mariah because she was throwing up...I gave her napkins when she needed them. I also held her Gatorade for her. - Lacy

After [the Space Center], we drove to the beach but we had to clean the bus. It was still cool to enjoy the view. It was really pretty. – Janaya



I did not enjoy my punishment [bus cleaning] and do not plan on getting in trouble again. – Taylor B.

I felt a little better about myself after cleaning the bus. I had time to think about my consequences and what I did wrong. Even though we didn't go to the beach we had fun cleaning and thought about better things about the trip. - Kendra

The beach was fun being there for the first time. Kinda sad there was a storm on the way so we couldn't swim but there were good pictures and laughter. – Asnina

Today we also went to Coco Beach. The sand felt so good under my toes. The cold water felt really good also. – Ra'Quel

It was surprisingly cold. – Asia

We went to the beach and it was my first time. When the waves hit my feet I realized that I could do anything and go anywhere I want. I'm realized I'm blessed to have people like Ms. Roberta, Ms. CT, and all the generous donors that donated and organized this trip. I'm really enjoying myself and I'm not going to let anyone ruin or take [that] away. – Vic'Taijah

I never went to the beach in my life. It was a fun experience. I didn't really swim. Just had my feet in the waves. After a few minutes in the waves, another wave was so big it went all the way up to my butt. It was cold but fun. – Haunnah





It was so big and beautiful. I have never in my life been to a beach...It was all so breathtaking...Thanks to Girls Inc. for taking us to the beach today. - Fatunay

Even though we weren't able to go all the way in the water, it felt great to be able to dip our feet in. – Aariona

We went to the beach and I wrote my name in the sand but the water messed it up...I had a lot of fun at the beach today. - Anisea

The beach was amazing. I loved it so much. I took some really good pictures of the ocean. A bird pooped on me but other than that it was good. – Angel

We dipped and walked in ankle deep. The sand didn't come all the way off my feet but it's okay. - Jazlyn

The tides were high and the waves were starting to get rough. – Desy

I overcame my fear because after I saw people go in and they didn't get eaten by sharks, I went in and it wasn't bad at all. It was just cold. – Annielia



There were thousands of shells in and on the sand. It wasn't that crowded on the side we were on. But they had large waves. The water was very nice and it was warm. - Liberty

We couldn't swim but we got to put our feet in the water. It smelled awful but looked so pretty. Sand is everywhere and I can't get it out from under my knees, in between my toes, and in my shoes. It just keeps coming back. I tried to wash it multiple times. - Liz

The beach was MAGICAL. We weren't able to go in the ocean higher than our ankles because of a red flag. There are some storms nearby. I still enjoyed it. We were splashing in the water, making sand castles, and collecting sea shells. I had an overall amazing time...My two friends aren't feeling too well and I hope they get better. I do appreciate all the teachers' help because they are being really kind and optimistic. One weird thing is that I'm now sitting in the middle of the two sick people. Just my luck. - Nora



The whole group had to go and wash their shoes and legs off. - Tamia

I learned from Ms. Sheebie that there are 1,436 miles from here to Omaha. - Taylor B.

On the bus we were asked how far Omaha is from Orlando and the answer is 1,436 miles. We were also asked what was the significance of some of the road names. Challenger and Columbia are both rocket ships and street names. - Jazlyn

Ms. CT told us to wake up and pay attention. She asked us how many states we passed to get here: four. The Ms. Sheebie asked how many miles we traveled which led to the other girls attempting to find it in the road atlas. After unsuccessful attempts me and Taylor set out to find it. This sort of led to a competition but the answer was found on page 7 on the mileage chart. We traveled 1,436 miles from Omaha to Orlando, Florida. - Somer



The Challenger Freeway is important because the Challenger exploded. 7 people died in this explosion. They were awake when it blew up. It blew from a lost fuel valve started by a fire. The Challenger was the first shuttle to have a teacher on it. - Asia

I also now know why the highway we drove on is named The Challenger. That was the second mission using a recyclable space craft but it exploded and burned up, killing everyone on the space craft. The highway is a memorial for the ones who lost their lives that day. May they rest in peace. - Somer

We went to a restaurant called Hot & Juicy Crawfish and I got chicken tenders and fries. They weren't like the ones from

Applebee's. They had a lot more crunch and flavor. The fries were really good, too. It was my first time trying Cajun fries. – Janaya

More people have gotten sick. Some more than others. I still feel woozy when I eat and still really sore but I still am having fun and trying to get along with everyone and have a good time. We just finished eating and it was so good. I ate so much I felt as if I was going to pop. I had the catfish and Cajun fries. It was so fresh. I got on the bus and my seatmate started complaining about my backpack that wasn't in her way. So, I just tried to ignore her and keep writing in my journal. - Asia



The wait was really long but the food was really good. – Jaiya

The fried shrimp had a lot of seasoning but it was still good. It was nice singing with some of the girls. The girls at my table were funny. - Jazlyn

I really enjoyed Hot & Juicy. It was my first time trying crawfish and it was delightful. – Taylor B.

We ate some wings. We waited a long time but it was worth the wait. - Anisea

Stopped at a drug store to get some over-the-counter meds. One of the girls thinks she sprained her ankle so we are also getting an ankle brace. - Ms. Roberta

There is this one girl who has really bad motion sickness. I feel so, so, so bad for her. She can't even have any fun, she is so sick. It's really sad. I am hoping and praying for her that she gets better. - Haunnah

To wrap up our evening, we all went to dinner at Hot & Juicy. I was a little nervous at first because I didn't know if I would like anything there. I ended up eating a catfish basket with Cajun fries. Today was a success; I had fun. – Ra'Quel

I got a fried shrimp basket. YUM. – Nora

The corn left a golden taste in your mouth. The dinner rolls felt like I was @ home with my mom and brother...All the staff make sure we are eating good! - Araya

I tried crawfish for the first time. It was delicious. – Kaionna

I tired catfish. I didn't really like it but it's always good to try something new. - Hinde

We went to Hot & Juicy Crawfish and it was fireeeee. Best food I had in a while especially for it being my first time going.... I had the shrimp po' boy with fries. It still feels so unreal that we are in Florida and I'm thankful every day for being able to come on this trip even after the rough turns yesterday. - Kendra

I got the soft-shell crab po boy and my table was able to put our money together and order some snow crab legs. That's what I call teamwork. – Aariona

We all ordered a pound of crab and we all pitched in. It was good and I'm glad I came up with a plan so we could all enjoy something tasty. - Sakira

When we get back to the hotel I will change into my swimsuit and go swimming. Everyone finally gets to swim tonight. If we can't swim in the ocean, this is the next best thing! – Liz



I tried frozen [freeze dried] strawberry ice cream for the first time. - Kaionna

Apparently, Nora got Astronaut Ice Cream at Kennedy's. Astronaut Ice Cream is freeze-dried ice cream. Not got Neapolitan so the package had chocolate, strawberry, and vanilla. She gave some to me and it was amazing. It rehydrated in my mouth and turned into ice cream. Well I barfed so I don't think I'm going to eat. – Liz

I really wasn't able to eat that day because I was sick...I went to the doctors and got two shots and an IV. - Mariah



We didn't get back to the hotel until after 11 p.m. The clinic gave us excellent service and in addition to treating Mariah took a look at Ariyah's tonsils. They really were wonderful professionals. It was funny to watch Mariah come to life as the IV dripped in. She went from a completely limp rag doll to asking, "What did you all have for dinner? Did you have crab? Was there hot sauce? Can we get the NBA game on this TV?" It was miraculous to watch her recovery right in front of our eyes. Thankfully Ms. CT brought some seafood back for me. She had my back! #SheHadMyCrabLegs Mariah was on a liquid diet for the next day so, sadly, no seafood for her... – Ms. Roberta

May 29, Day 4 – Everglades Boat Ride & Native American presentation and Epcot



Today wasn't very fun because I didn't get to eat breakfast but I didn't let that get to me. – Makayla

I was late getting up. Well, our whole room was because our alarm clock stopped working. We hurried to get dressed than ran downstairs to see everyone getting on the bus so I rushed to the bus and got on and got in my seat. – Asia

Today I finally got the cinnamon roll thing. I was so happy. - Angel

When I was on the bus I was still kind of worried about Mariah

and that she would get sick again. – Arianna

Whenever we would see [an alligator] everyone would stand up on their toes and ether look to the sides or in front of the boat...when we were done we got to feed the baby alligators. When you kept hitting the food on the wood they would all run over to the same spot and just sit there until you dropped food and then when you do, they go crazy. – Taylor M.

We started our day with a trip to Boggy Creek or, as Ms. CT pronounces it, Boogie Creek. – Somer

Boggy Creek. More like Buggy Creek because those bugs were bugging me. I almost fought one of them. - Hinde

Today I started to feel better. I started eating a lot of good food. First, we did the airboat ride. That was my favorite part of Day 4. I was nervous because I thought I would get sick. - Mariah

There were girls, including me, who kept freaking out about the love bugs and the people who kept freaking out whenever we saw an alligator. I loved the boat ride. The wind kept blowing in my face and almost made my scarf fall off so everyone was laughing. I'd never been to an actual swamp and seen an alligator in its natural habitat so that was very exciting. The love bugs just made me almost have an anxiety attack. I'm not afraid of bugs but when there are so many in one spot flying around my face, I get freaked out. – Famo

The boat felt very nice and peaceful. I enjoyed the scenery. – Fatuma

I've never really been on a boat ride. – Vic'Taijah

The boat ride made me feel free. It was very beautiful. – Ariyah

I enjoyed going to Boggy Creek Airboat Adventures...It was the most fun of everything we've done. To me, there wasn't a dull moment today. - Janaya

The airboats were loud but when we stopped it was so peaceful and calming. - Kendra

The boat ride was very calm and relaxing to me. I enjoyed every bit of it. - Fartunay

I saw otters, alligators, frogs, and birds on the water, and tadpoles...They had flowers and lily pads. It reminded me of Princess Tiana, the movie, because I would've never thought I would see that in person. – Kaionna

The frolicking otters were the best! They were like a Disney nature documentary. I don't think I have ever seen otters in a natural habitat. Alligators either, for that matter. The girls aren't the only ones having "first time" experiences. I loved the boat ride. The scenery was unlike any I had ever seen and it was very beautiful and serene. The boats are loud but our guides stop the boats for us to see and listen. An amazing opportunity for Nebraska folk! – Ms. Roberta

The guide told us that the love bugs – these bugs that mate in mid-air and don't bite but annoy - are attracted to light colors. We are all in white shirts. Of course. – Ms. Roberta

There were so many bugs trying to land on us that we just kept swatting them away. After we got on the boat, they left us alone.... When we got back on dry land the bugs returned. - Asia

There were too many bugs. I was running away and hitting them away from my face. They kept on following me. - Anisea

I saw five alligators and I named them all. – Alaijah

Did you know that alligators are with their parents until the age of two and on their own for the rest of their 60-something years of living. - Hinde

I thought the alligators would attack us from the boat. – Lacy

We saw a bird called a grackle. - Janaya

It was hot, nasty, and lots of bugs. The swamps and wildlife are not good for me. I hated all the bugs and the water is disgusting. Plus, the smell made me want to puke. - Jaiya

We went on airboats that were so loud that hurt your ears. But we put on headphones and that felt better. – Kami



It was hilarious because we had to wear headphones so that our ear would be fine. It made communicating difficult. I was trying to ask the girls if they wanted to take a picture and they could barely hear me so I had to keep repeating myself and we just laughed it off. - Ariyah

I was thinking I was going to fall off [the boat]. - Makayla

It was really fun. We were whipping and gliding across the marshland in search of wildlife and alligators. - Somer

I never thought I would see nature from any point of view besides the view where it is itchy and filled with buds. But it was actually calming and I saw an alligator up close. - Taylor B.



Today I felt way better. When I woke up I got ready and ate breakfast. The first thing we did was the airboat ride. It was really fun. I was nervous because I thought I would get sick. We started moving and all I could hear was the loud motor behind me. We saw many different types of animals. I saw these white birds in the swamp that were huge. The boat ride was actually really fast but that made it fun. We would sail through the tall grass and water would splash us. Our driver would do this trick to where we would tilt over to the side and get splashed by water. About 15 minutes into our trip, we saw a baby alligator. Our driver said it was about 4 years old. On the way back to shore, we saw a big alligator. It was about 10 feet. We weren't able to get too close because the alligator went under the water and we couldn't find it. - Mariah



The not so fun part were those bugs, they were everywhere. I think we attracted them with our beauty. - Jamia

Love bugs. The bane of my existence. - Nora

The instructor told us that the bugs don't bite but I swatted them away because I don't like bugs on or around me. - Vic'Taijah

Our guide, Tanner, did a good job of answering our questions and explaining what we were seeing. - Sakira

Besides all of the love bugs attracted to us, it was a great boat ride. - Asha

Alligators are able to sit out in the sun all day and the panels on their backs absorb the sun like solar panels so they are able to hunt in the water all night without being cold. - Aariona

When you see [alligators] in person, they're terrifying. - Araya

The ride was so cool. We got to see a baby alligator and an adult one. I made sure I sat in the front so I could get a good view. The front was also the splash zone. We got splashed a lot. – Ra'Quel

When we got off the airboats, I immediately went to the gift shop because of the love bugs. I could not stand them even though we were in their natural habitat. – Taylor B.

I was a little distracted by the bugs. They were everywhere LITERALLY. – Kendra



Everyone was complaining about the bugs but they weren't even bothering me. - Janaya

I went into the gift shop to buy something for my sis. I got my lil sis an alligator pen and I might be borrowing it to write in my journal. – Nora

The swamp was the best experience so far this trip. There were love bugs everywhere, but they didn't bother me. Our tour guide, Tyan, was nice and talked to us. He answered all questions and gave us the rule about the swamps: "For every gator you see, there's a ton more you don't see." Being on the airboat was fun. I just didn't like it when the water flew up on my face. The boat was so loud we had to wear ear muffs.... After the ride I went to feed baby gators...We fed them pellets with minerals and veggies. - Desy

Wildlife is so peaceful and interesting. But it can be dangerous. - Kaionna

There was a ton of alligators. It reminded me of a nature channel. Then we got to see the baby alligators and some people paid to feed them and when you shook the bag they all came running. It was like the scene in **Lion King** where the monkey lifts up Simba and everyone bows and runs. - Liz

We went to meet with a Native American man and it was pretty cool to meet another tribe member and hear his language and to also learn about the history of his tribe. - Angel

I enjoyed the native speaking even though the bugs bothered me. Two of my friends are part of the Omaha tribe and considering how active they are, it was shocking to hear another tribe in Florida is extinct... I wonder what [the presenter] would be ranked as. He didn't have many tattoos so he wouldn't have been a chief or chief's relative. He had



protection tattoos on his arms and legs, thought. They looked like cuffs, as if he was locking evil out by jailing them. I thought it was strange that he didn't have a face tattoo even though he told us the face is where most evil spirits go inside of you. Maybe he will get one soon. – Famo

I learned how they got their tattoos. - Dahrma

It was very special to me because he carried his tribe and culture around on him with confidence and you could really tell he believed and was committed to his tribe. – Arianna

We met a Native American. He said some really interesting things. He said that the tribe in Florida is "extinct." I thought that was very sad. He also said that other Native Americans weren't treated fairly and that it "is still happening today." When I met him, he made me realize that there are many groups of people that aren't treated fairly. Before I met him I only knew about one group of people being treated unfairly. That made me realize that there are probably more people just like him that are teaching people about their culture and speaking up and sharing what happened. – Lacy

I really liked learning about the native culture. The guy was funny and he taught us how to kill an alligator... I am native so it's interesting being acknowledged by other natives. - Kendra

He says he loves sleeping outside...he feels at home. - Nicoletta

I learned a lot of things like how to say Omaha in native language. It's Oo-ma-háa and I like how they say it. And I would like to say "ninyay" to Girls Inc. for letting me be here and that is "thank you" in native language. It's nice learning new thing about different cultures. – Asnina

Hearing about the Native past was cool. I'm actually from the Cherokee tribe and I didn't know all of those tribes were extinct and how Miami is an extinct tribe. - Kaionna

We got to hear from a real Native American that talked about his tribe and how he uses his survival skills. It was interesting hearing about his culture and how he made his everyday utensils. – Ra'Quel

My family is Native & African but we're not that connected to our culture and I would love to know more about my culture and things related to it. - Janaya

It's important to learn about our history so we don't repeat it. - Asha

His mother came from a Canadian tribe and his father came from a tribe in Texas...He taught us 2 ways to hunt a gator. – Desy

He showed us two different ways to kill an alligator. – Jazlyn

He showed us the different parts of an alligator and which parts are good to use as armor. He told us that the softest part of the alligator is its belly. The hardest part of an alligator is its back and that's what they put on their legs for protection during [alligator] killing. – Lacy





It was really interesting how he's so skillful with his hands. He told us that everything he had on was handmade. I know that must have taken a long time. - Ariyah

When he told us about how he was a native survivor and that he can survive in the wilderness – that was actually cool because many of us aren't from here and we don't know how it really feels to survive and hunt because we are so used to the modern world where everything is handed to us or we go buy our fish at the market. – Habiba

I want to thank Mr. Absalom for going back for my camera. I tend to forget and leave things. - Sakira



We went to Epcot and it was so freaking fun. – Anisea

It was the most fun I had so far. We rode the Test Track, Soaring, Nature boat ride and got ice cream.... When we were on Soaring and it ended Ms. CT said, "No, I'm not leaving." She really enjoyed it. - Asia

We went to Epcot. It was fun. I was walking with the big kids today and it was chill. – Alaijah

I thank Ms. Roberta, Ms. CT, and Ms. Bev for staying with the 4 ladies that lost their cards. It took a lot of patience. I should have just followed directions and taken a picture or given it to Ms. Sheebie to hold. – Jamia

Getting a lost card replaced is no joke. Two of the girls lost cards in the Magic Kingdom (and we needed them to get into Epcot. We were able to get them replaced with two (long!) visits to "City Hall." They suggest you take a photo of the back of your card before you go into the park in case you lose it. I wish we had known that before we distributed cards to 42 girls! I did take a photo of mine but apparently none of the girls did (despite my encouragement and offer to pass cameras out to everyone) because we had four girls missing cards as we entered Epcot. The first woman who "helped" us told us we would have to buy 4 new passes and we would get a refund if we could "resolve the issue." Hmmmmm. No. We went to another window and got Cassie, an excellent customer service representative for Epcot. She was remarkable and able to help us replace the 4 cards by figuring out which of our party of 46 had already entered the park and which cards we had at her counter. It took a bit of time but she was persistent and cheerful. – Ms. Roberta



Dear Journal, I went on the funnest ride of my life called Soarin'. At first, I was scared but then I got used to soaring to different countries. – Kami

We went on a ride that feels like we were flying and it was funny when Ms. Bev was getting scared. I was laughing the whole ride so thank you! 😊 – Ebony

There was a Soarin' the world ride that was cool and I liked the details to it. Where it took us, it showed different places and wherever you went there was a smell or touch affect with it. - Arianna

I went on some rides. They were all boring. However, we did go on one flying simulator. When we went to India on the flying simulator they sprayed jasmine scented air. It smelled amazing, like perfume. - Liz



My favorite ride was the Imagination ride.
– Aariona

They spent so much time and energy into those figure cuttings [topiaries]. I've spent half the day trying to figure out how they did it. - Fatuma

At Epcot, we walked around to see how each section represented a different country. For dinner we ate at Lotus Blossom Café...in China. The food wasn't so good. We all think that we wasted money. - Mariah

I really liked that park. Especially when we walked around the world. Or ran,

which we did to meet up on time. All of the rides were amazing. Even if they weren't thrilling, they were fascinating...There was fun at every corner. - Somer

I was kind of made because they had every other continent or country except mine – Africa...But me and a friend got to eat in a nice restaurant in Italy and it was seafood. I had the calamari and it was really good. – Liberty

Angel and I had 2 different lunches. We ate in Japan and China. I had pork ramen (Japan) and fried rice with chicken, eggs, and grilled shrimp (China). - Jazlyn

For lunch we went to the place that was next to Nemo and it was very fancy. My group and I kind of had a disagreement about if we should eat there or not but we decided just to stay. - Arianna

Then I went to China and had some Chinese food that made me sick. My stomach still hurts a little. – Liz

When we went to Epcot, my group and I went to a restaurant called Coral Reef and we were seated by an aquarium. We all got salads and most of us got lobster bisque, a soup with chunks of lobster. When we were done we all kind of thought we felt like adults. – Taylor M.

We danced to the music outside which was fun and funny. I tried Moroccan food which was good and Mexican food which was also good. – Asnina

I went on so many roller coasters that were future themed. It was a TON of fun. I had an amazing time with all of my friends. – Nora

At first, I didn't think there was anything to do but thanks to a nice lady we could find rides that we completely skipped over. And all the rides we were able to go on were so fun. The one ride I liked the most was a space ride that simulated a trip to Mars. It was the best ride yet it simulated the G-force and strain your body would experience. The most interesting ride was one that showed us how Epcot scientists developed plants to make growing crops more efficient. - Caroline

The huge dome at Epcot made me feel like I was at the Henry Doorly Zoo. I loved that the park expressed many different cultures. I thought that was an amazing idea and a great way for people to learn about different cultures. An easy way to learn about another culture could be through their food.

That's why I chose to eat at the Mexican area. My favorite area was Morocco. They serve food that I've had before and that's common for me, so it was cool to see that. They also had pretty dresses that remind me of my mom because she owns a lot of them. – Asha

My favorite place was Morocco because it reminded me of home. They had henna and our kaftan-type dresses. - Fatuma

I even did a good deed. One of the girls didn't have any more money so I ended up putting in \$5 to her meal. I couldn't just sit and eat while she sat and watched. Four more girls pitched in also. Will I do it again? Probably not because the trip is supposed to teach many lessons and one of those is responsibility. - Desy

My favorite ride was Under the Sea with Nemo and Friends. It was like a roller coaster that went through a tunnel. In the tunnel, projections from the movie **Nemo** were shown. It was definitely a fun day. I had a good time! – Ra'Quel



Me and Jazzy watched some short films from Walt Disney like Feast, Paper, and the original Walt Disney. I seriously liked them a lot. – Angel

I want to thank Ms. Bev for being helpful, respectful, and sweet. She's been nothing but loving and caring. - Araya

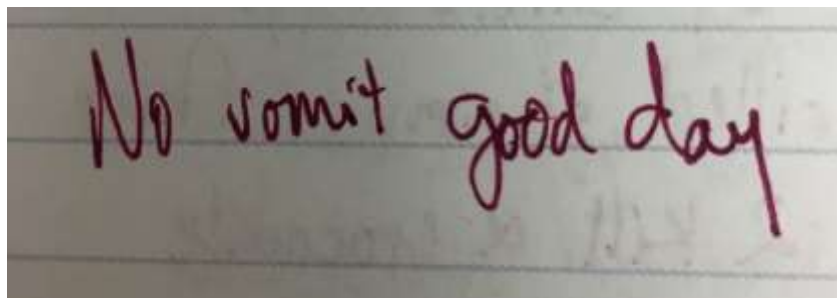
We went on a ride called Test Track. First, we had to design the car. When we designed it, the car was on the board. It was Makayla, Nora and me and we lost to grown folks. But other than that, it was fun. – Tamia

We made the best of our time while we were here. - Kendra

My favorite ride was the Soarin' ride. It took us around the world. – Taylor B.

Me and Nora got lost from everyone but we just kept going on the rides and they were fun. We went on this space mission one and when I got off I wasn't feeling so good. Me and Nora ran to the other side of the park just to get an ice bar and we could have gotten it right there by the door. – Makayla

I had a note in my journal "no vomit good day." I do call that a good day. – Ms. Roberta



No vomit good day

May 30, Day 5 – Travel Day to Atlanta



Well, today I woke up late. Had no breakfast. But now I learned my lesson. This was my first time I haven't eaten at all but just like I said, this happens one time. It won't happen again. – Dahrma

Today our room finally ate. We woke up at 6:10 so our room could get up and get our stuff together and go downstairs to eat. – Tamia

Florida is known for oranges but I never saw any farms with oranges. – Taylor B.

We were asked a trivia question. How long will it take us to get to Atlanta driving 50 mph with a 1-hour lunch stop? My answer is 9 hrs. 48 minutes. – Jazlyn

We stopped at a rest stop to eat. Then I had to use the restroom but I didn't want to go alone because at the other rest stop they had a poster of all the people missing and I didn't want to be the next one because I still have family and still have a goal to achieve and a career to pursue. I have a bright future ahead of me. So instead, I went with Jamia and Ariyah just to be safe and to follow the rules and know there's people that love and care for me. – Asnina

Today we are on the road going to Atlanta/Georgia... I'm excited to get to the hotel because we have been driving for a while and I don't like road trips... When I am older I'm going to be the smartest girl/person in the world so I can build a teleporter so no one ever has to go on road trips again unless they want to (for some bonding time) ... I wanna go swimming with all of my friends. My roommates and I have grown to be really good friends. – Nora

Giving the girls group projects is fun because you get girls involved and it also wakes them up... Helping friends find photo perfect poses for the contest was fun because people come up with great ideas sometimes I wouldn't think of but that's the whole point of working as a group. There's no "I" in "team;" you all work as one. – Habiba

Every girl on this bus has been through something or is still going through something. For example, Ms. Sheebie. She had breast cancer. Or at least that what the girl have been telling me. So that makes her strong, smart, and bold. Everyone is smart in their own way and on different levels. – Vic'Taijah

Not only do I want to be strong, smart, and bold, I also want to be successful and to me that means being happy and appreciating everything I have and need. Also going to and graduating from college because I know I've got high school down... I want to tell Girls Inc. what I want to be. Not only what I want to be but what I'm going to be. When I grow up I'm going to be a pediatric nurse, photographer (personal), and traveler. I already have the traveler part down thanks to the help of Girls Inc. and my family. And for the pediatric part I already know how to start. First, I'm going to learn all the majors I'm going to have to take and, second, take some of those in high school. Third, I'm going to be a

caretaker at UNMC to shadow my career path. Fourth, I'm going to become who I want to be. That's my way of being strong, smart, and bold. Taking action. - Hinde

We stopped to eat sandwiches. I had a plain peanut butter sandwich. I also had watermelon and Cheetos. There was a ton of gnats. They all followed us onto the bus and I had to kill them with my flip flop. I haven't seen any love bugs since we got into Atlanta, although I am sure they're here. They are 2 bugs. A male and a female connected at the butt. They can't bite but they are annoying. – Liz



For dinner we ordered pizza that had really thin crust but it was good. For the first time, I had veggie pizza! I'm really not a fan of veggies but I must admit that pizza was amazing. - Desy



May 31, Day 6 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, Ebenezer Baptist Church, CNN, and World of Coca Cola



Today wasn't very fun because I got in trouble for laughing... What we did last night was not OK because we did not have to wake you up like that and I want to say sorry. We shouldn't have done it. – Makayla

I am sorry for the morning and waking Ms. Roberta and CT up for our actions and messiness. Also, for Ms. Roberta coming and talking to us about it. – Tamia

Today started out with a great breakfast and a happy mood. – Jamia

Today my alarm clock finally worked. We tested it over and over again until we knew it worked and then we all went to sleep. We woke up at six, took our showers, got dressed, and went to breakfast. The breakfast was different at this hotel than the other hotel. They had waffles. The other hotel had pancakes. - Asia

I woke up with the best attitude. I sang as I got dressed. - Desy

So yesterday I did not write in my journal because I was pen-less. - Haunnah

Our first stop was the Martin Luther King, Jr. Museum. It is so beautiful outside. They have this memorial fountain with Martin's and his wife's graves. The fountain has meaningful words that say, "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream." – Jamia

We saw the reflecting pool where Dr. and Mrs. Martin Luther King are buried. Angel and I made some wishes. The eternal flame is very beautiful and has a nice meaning. "Instead of the arms race, we want to life up the human race. Instead of investing in more weapons of death and destruction, we want to see investment in education, economics, and human development, so that all people have the opportunity to realize their full human potential." Coretta Scott King. I feel like that is an excellent quote to explain things that are happening now in the country. Especially with school shootings and trying to arm teachers with guns.
– Jazlyn

I have a dream that one day I am going to be a successful, independent woman. What's your dream? - Hinde

The Martin Luther King, Jr. exhibit was interesting and kind of emotional. I always get emotional when it comes to black history. Black history is just touching to me. I love learning about my history and being in the church where he was a pastor made me think I was back in the time with him. - Kendra

After going to the educational and inspirational MLK, Jr Center, I came to this conclusion: as a young black woman learning about how my ancestors and fellow Black/African-American people fought for what they had, it teaches me the importance of being grateful. I am privileged in the generation I was born in and the fact that many men and women suffered for this result is a thing to be thankful for. – Famo

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site Georgia was an amazing experience for me to even go there and learn more about who helped equal rights come alive. – Arianna

I really love my black history because it is my history. - Asia



In the room there were actually things that belonged to Dr. King and Coretta. I found that very cool. - Mariah

Did you know that 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of MLK's assassination? – Ra'Quel

In order to be heard, he used non-violence. He used his voice and protested peacefully to fight for their rights which I found smart and the right way to get something without using violence. That is why I look up to King and see him as a great leader.
– Fartunay

The Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial was emotional and beautiful. - Araya

It was really cool to see his actual pieces of clothing. I remember seeing his wife's black veil matched her lipstick. We went to the church he grew in. Being in the church made my chest tight and gave me goosebumps. I watched a video of MLK's sister talking about growing up in the church. A focal point was when she spoke of a shooting that took place within the church and how her mother was shot. – Desy



I love the pretty yellow long dress that Coretta Scott wore to one of the speeches Martin L. King had. And I got to see the church where he preached and it was so lovely. I always wanted to go there and now I can check it off my bucket list. – Anisea

A quote that stuck out to me was, “Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won. You earn it and win it every generation” because it’s just really true and deep. It’s true that every generation has a new struggle. - Janaya

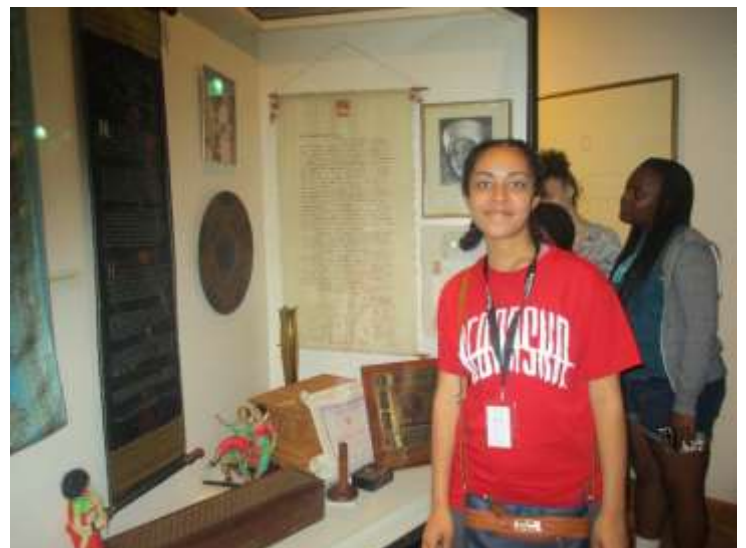
We saw Coretta’s hat that she wore to his funeral. We even saw Martin’s suits and books. – Taylor M.

Not only did the exhibit showcase the achievements of Martin Luther King, Jr., but the Center showed many examples of great leaders that fought for freedom, equality, and rights. Men AND women. One example of a female figure they presented in the -especially-made-for-inspirational-women room was Sonia Sanchez... She is a humble poet who wrote her words of freedom with rhythm and passion, making a movement in literature. Considering the fact that I am leaning towards a career in literature, Ms. Sanchez teaches me that I can not only write stories but I can write feelings and emotions. I can write for a cause that can change people’s lives... Coretta Scott King was also recognized not for being Mr. King’s wife but for being “a leader in her own right.” - Famo

It's cool to see that MLK looked up to Ghandi and took after him. It shows that leaders are students at one point. – Asha

I think that African American history is something that really needs to be taught. It would really educate our African American people. It’s important that we learn what some of our African American leaders did for us and what they had to go through that led to us having our rights. - Jaiya

We got to see where MLK was buried. When we saw the pictures from his funeral with his kids and wife I started to cry. It was really beautiful and sad. – Liz



If it wasn't for Girls Inc, I wouldn't be able to learn new things being at the place where things happened instead of being in class and feeling sleepy. – Habiba

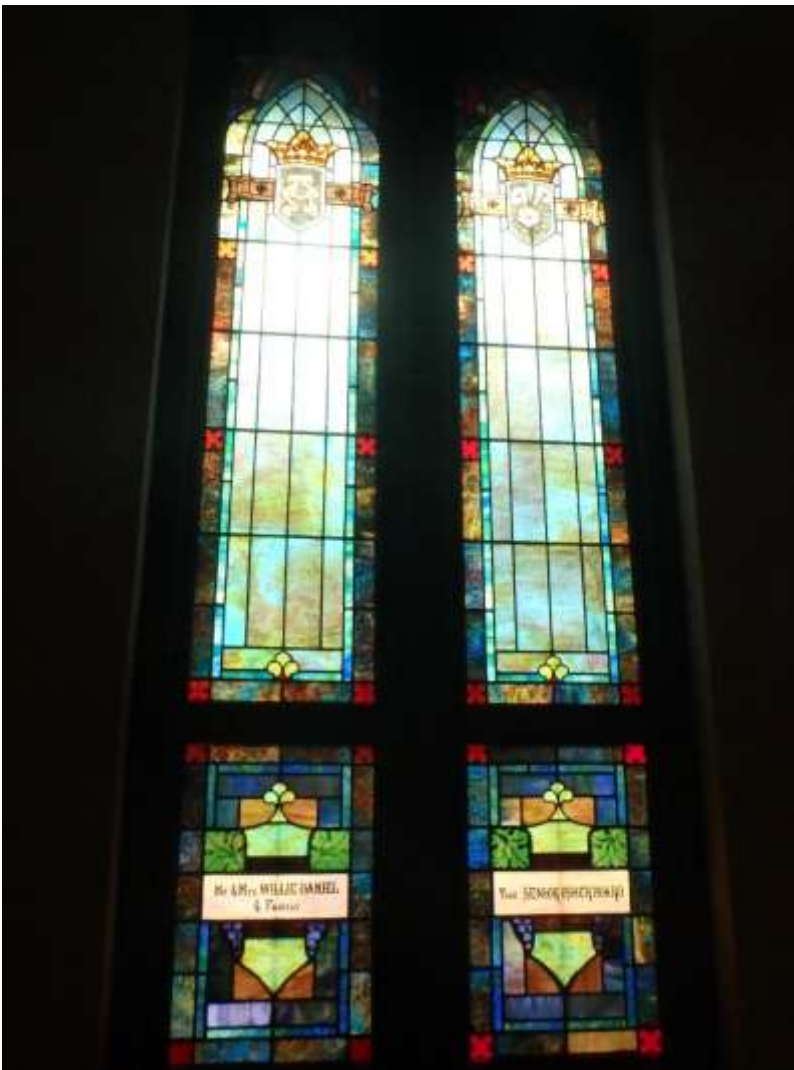
Ms. CT said girls from a prior trip in D.C. saw Dorothy Height. She fought for equal rights for both African Americans and women. - Jamia

Today I also learned about some very important women. Mary Church Terrell was an orator who marched for women's rights and forced Washington, D.C. restaurants to open their doors to black people. Ida B. Wells-Barnett was a passionate educator who taught thousands of African Americans how to achieve personal and political empowerment. – Ra'Quel

I got to see a lot of realistic photos of Rosa Parks' family and events that she contributed to and also Ghandi. – Asnina

I just learned that Harriet Tubman was a nurse and a spy during the Civil War. - Jamia

Many people have sweat, bled, and died to get this far mostly for us black girls...We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for many heroes that stood up for our freedom. – Habiba



I really enjoyed seeing the church where MLK preached. I appreciated seeing it because my grandpa would love to have seen him before he died. – Taylor B.

I noticed that in the church the clock was frozen above at 10:30 a.m. That was the time of Martin' funeral. In the hall while exiting the church you saw a photo of everyone gathered around Martin's casket...Thousands of people were there and that shows that Martin had a huge impact on others' lives and that he had much love and support/supporters. – Ariyah



Today we also took a tour behind the scenes of CNN... Behind the scenes they use teleprompters, Teleprompters are special cameras that let the news reporters see their scripts while also looking into the camera. – Ra’Quel

I learned that CNN stands for Cable News Network. CNN was founded in 1980 by Ted Turner who invested \$20 million into the network. CNN became the first channel to provide 24-hour television news coverage. CNN was the only news outlet with the capability to communicate from inside Iraq during the bombing campaign in the 1991 Gulf War. - Ariyah

We got to CNN super early so we ate lunch and went shopping. I may have gone a little overboard with spending. - Jazlyn

We got to see how they edit the news live and it was all really cool. – Nora

We also saw journalists that speak different languages. Our tour guide showed us an app that CNN created for breaking news and interesting stories people want to hear about. - Asia



I thought it was really cool to see how they developed stories before they aired. - Caroline

News broadcasting is a career choice that I'm interested in. If I decide to go into that field, I want to work with a big company like CNN. – Asha

I would like to try working on a TV show and if I don't like it, I'll just stick to dancing. - Jaiya

I was hoping to see Carl Azuz from CNN 10, but I didn't. ☹️ - Desy

I hope I get to see Carl Azuz. – Angel

I met Carl Azuz. I used to watch him every day for American History class. We watched CNN news. That was awesome. – Vic'Taijah

I wanted to see Carl Azuz. – Liberty

The escalator we went up holds the world record at 193 feet. We also met Carl Azuz the CNN 10 News anchor. Anderson Cooper is my favorite CNN news anchor. - Sakira

We went to CNN. That place was amazing. When we went on that escalator, man was I so scared but I made it. The tour was fun and dunny. I was so shocked to see when we saw Carl Azuz. Like, I've been watching him since elementary so to actually see him in real life was OMG and I'm in high school and still a fan. To be honest, I can be a news worker if all I have to do is edit. I edit my pics all the time to make them come out cute. I'm just kidding. I'm cute all natural. But I can work for them [CNN]. – Asnina

We saw Carl Azuz at CNN. That was so cool because he is like famous to me. I always see him on CNN at school. – Kaionna

We even saw Carl Azuz which was pretty cool. Now I feel famous since I met him. - Hinde

We saw Carl Azuz. I was like, "Omggggg hii!" I was excited to see him because we always see him at school when we watch CNN 10. - Kendra

I got to see the world's longest escalator and even got to ride it which kind of gave me anxiety at first because I hate heights, but it was also cool to experience. The tour was very informational and our tour guide was very funny which made it even better. – Asha

I saw the co-star of a show called Impractical Jokers on TruTV. His name is Sal but he ws in a rush so I didn't ask for a picture but I watch the show all the time and was completely starstruck. - Somer

I never watched CNN but I will start now that I know everything that goes into it. – Aariona



CNN is a very hardworking place. - Araya

It was cool to see behind the scenes of what they do while not on air or practicing. Also, to see them working on their computers in the offices. I was happy to see all of that on the 50-minute tour that I thought would be boring but was actually cool. - Arianna

For the news people, I couldn't be in their position. Too much chaos going on at one time. – Fatuma

The people that were on the air would wave and we could see what they do when it's a commercial. They study their line and crack jokes with their partners. At CNN it got me thinking of another job I think I should pursue and going to the tour made me think of broadcasting or journalism. – Taylor M.

One fact that stood out to me was live broadcast is 7 seconds delayed on our TV. – Desy

One thing he [CNN tour guide] said is that the food court used to be an ice-skating rink. - Haunnah

It was my first time trying a Spicy Chicken Deluxe from Chick-Fil-A. – Taylor B.

I got to try Chick-Fil-A for the first time and I wasn't disappointed. - Asha

I got some good Chinese food at the food court there. I didn't think I could ever eat Chinese food again after Epcot gave me that Chinese that made me sick. – Liz

We had Chinese and chicken. It was really, really good. I wasn't expecting it to taste like that. - Asia

Coca Cola World was my favorite thing for the day...Coke is my favorite drink. It's literally my life. I drink way too much in a day. It's like an addiction. – Fatuma

The good thing was we got free- and yes, I said free - Coca Colas. – Tamia

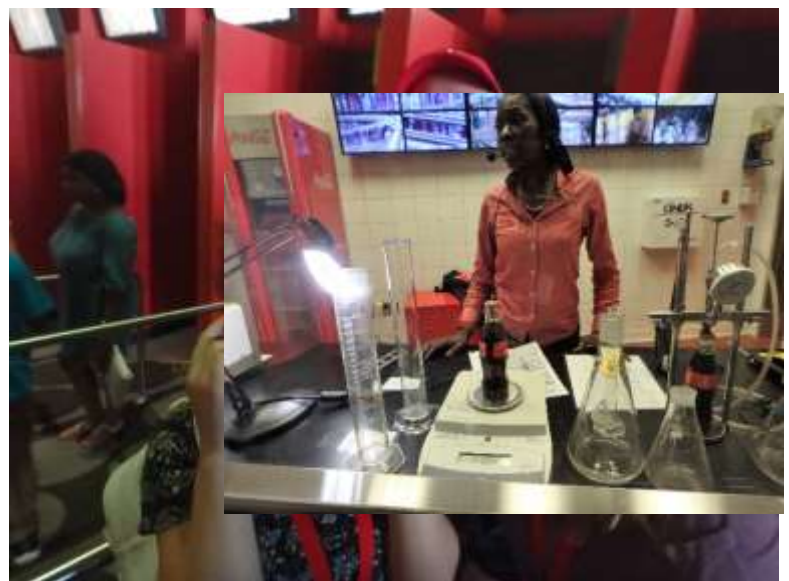
World of Coca-Cola was boring. - Araya

Seeing the World of Coca-Cola was very cool and Red. The clip they showed for the tour was emotional and heart-warming. - Asha

I tried flavors from Greece (Fanta: pineapple), Italy, Korea (Sprite), and Latin America. The one from Italy was DISGUSTING!!! It made me want to throw up. The Greece one tasted like a Mexican drink called Jarritos: Pina. My favorite had to be from Korea. The Sprite was good but less flavorful than North America's.

I liked the STEM station where a woman told us about all of the science involved in making Coca-Cola. She said it was her first time working at that station. I thought she did a fantastic job – very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. We were happy to be her guinea pigs that day. – Ms. Roberta

We got to go to the Coca-Cola store and OMG I don't even like Coca-Cola but it was so beautiful. I'm just glad we got to get here for my sister because that's her favorite drink and I'm glad she got to experience the moment. I'll stick to sprite and water and Gatorade, though. I think I got burnt because it was so hot and the sun was just beating my face up so I'm really dark now. But you know what they say, "the blacker the berry the sweeter the juice." Okaaaay I know that's right. - Hinde





We got to try different flavors of Coca-Cola and they weren't that bad. They actually tasted pretty good. We also saw how they make Coca-Cola. It was pretty interesting. – Kami

We got to try over 100 different flavors of Coca-Cola. I learned a lesson doing that and it was don't mix all the flavors together. It will make your stomach hurt. Overall, today was a nice day. I learned a lot while having fun. – Ra'Quel

My favorite part was being able to take a pic with the super cute bear. – Aariona

When Coke was first released the most popular flavors were lemon, orange, vanilla, pineapple, strawberry, cherry, and chocolate. - Sakira

The funniest and most annoying thing was trying to get the secret formula. I should have known they wouldn't give it to us. - Fatuma



I tasted over 100 flavors from around the world. There was one that fizzed up your nose and one that hurt the back of my throat and tasted like hand-sanitizer. – Liz

We got to try different kinds of pops from different kinds of places. Most of them made me want to puke. - Jaiya

The worst [flavor] was Beverly. But the first continent I went to was Africa. They were all pretty good. I put them in second in best tasting. – Liberty

Some of them were nasty. Especially the one called Beverly which was from Italy. – Arianna

We spit out the nasty one...It was very fun. – Anisea

We tried one nasty pop from Italy and it was called Beverly. It tasted like hand sanitizer and I was thinking "who would drink this?" – Taylor M.

Some were good but others were awful. The worst was this soda called Beverly. It tasted awful. - Caroline

Trying pops from all over the world was very interesting. They had sweet flavors, tangy, sour, bubbly, and disgusting. And when I say disgusting, I'm referring to Beverly from Italy. It tastes like sour medicine you are forced to drink when you're a kid with a fever. Me, Habiba, Fartunay, and Famo decided that we'd take "shots" of Beverly and on the count of three we'd all drink at the same time. Habiba counted and when she got to 3 everyone faked their shots but Habiba actually ended up drinking it which was funny. - Asha

I tried a lot of pops and some were nasty. – Angel

It was very adventurous as far as the flavors. My stomach started to hurt, but at least I tried the flavors from around the world. – Desy

The one I disliked...tasted like medicine...My most favorite was from Brazil. It had a nice fruity taste. – Habiba

I did not like Beverly...It tasted like hand sanitizer. - Lacy

There was so much pop. Bitter, sweet, watered down, strong, and nasty. – Kaionna

The Beverly one from Italy was so bitter and nasty. – Kendra

Some of those pops are disgusting. I was literally like “Ew. Why ate those even pops?” So far it’s been a good day. I’m even friends with people I didn’t even like at first. - Janaya

I’m all Coca-Cola’d out. – Haunnah

Most of the ones I tasted were nasty. Afterward my stomach hurt. - Mariah

Now we are going to get burritos, head to the hotel, and maybe swim. - Jazlyn

We went to a taco place and it was good. – Makayla

Tonight, we had burritos and I ate mine before we walked back to the bus. – Asia

I was proud of the girls’ ordering ability at the burrito place. Forty-two girls ordering individualized burritos (extra rice, no beans, more beans, sour cream, no sour cream, jalapenos, etc....) is no easy feat. I told them to think about what they wanted so they would be ready to order quickly and confidently. And they did! – Ms. Roberta

I wasn’t a fan of dinner today. – Desy





Ms. Hannah, a Girls Inc. volunteer extraordinaire who moved to Atlanta, came to have burritos with us and to take a dip in the pool. It was great to see her! – Ms. Roberta

I really miss my mom and sister. I also miss my lovely phone. I feel like I've missed so much. Facetime, calls, messages, and my friends. I just have to suck it up til then. - Jaiya



June 1, Day 7 – Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and 16th St. Church

Waking up this morning, I knew I had to wake up early and wake up my roommates so I can get to breakfast before 7:20 so I can eat. So, I knew I had to wake up at 6:00, get out the shower and brush my teeth and wear my clothes by 6:30, then wake up the rest of my roommates and tell them to get ready since they took a shower at night. Then clean up until 7:20 and we'll all go downstairs and eat. – Asnina

Today I had breakfast but I wasn't really feeling the food. – Angel

I woke up late again but that is my fault and my consequence is to not eat breakfast. - Asia

We watched **Black Panther** on the bus... It was a pretty interesting movie except for the fighting and killing people. – Kami

We watched **Black Panther**. It was really good and I enjoyed it very much. - Jazlyn

We are currently in Alabama and 41 miles away from Birmingham. I can't wait to get there. When I first think about Birmingham I think about the church bombing and the little girls. And also the book I read in the fourth grade called *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. It's a really good book. It's probably my favorite. There's also a movie from it. It takes you in the life of a black family who @ first didn't live in a racist state so when they moved to Birmingham things were different for them I don't know, you just have to read the book for yourself. - Hinde

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute was breathtaking...we watched a film that lead us into the actual exhibit. – Desy

They have another name for Birmingham called Bombingham because of the bombings that were being brought to the South but mainly here. - Jamia

Today we visited the history-filled state [Alabama] and explored its most significant areas for black, white, and world history: the Birmingham Civil rights Institute, the 16th St. Baptist Church, and a park that memorialized the Civil Rights Act. Each place spoke the language of the people that stood there less than 50 years ago, the language of freedom. While I was watching the presentation video, it was difficult not to let my eye stray from the screen while they showed graphic photos of people during

slavery and even after being hanged by the KKK... Strong people that can speak about their hard past are the kind to look up to. Before I came on this trip, whenever someone would mention slavery, racism, black segregation, etc. I would get very uncomfortable or avoid the topic. Learning and standing where it happened helped me realize how real it is... This is real. Its still going on, too. But now we can speak out on it more because of our rights, maybe it will be easier to get rid of it. – Famo



I got to learn a lot of new things and collected a lot of new information about segregation between blacks and whites. At first, I was never interested about things like this, but after this visit at the museum I wanted to keep learning more. - Fartunay

What really freaked me out was the actual Ku Klux Klan outfit which was donate by an anonymous person. God forbid he was a part of it. – Taylor B.

I learned so many things today. In the march in Birmingham, over a thousand children were arrested. Ms. CT admired how much information that I had learned. Birmingham was the most segregated city. Seeing and hearing Martin Luther King stating the "I have a dream" speech – it was so empowering and inspirational. – Araya

When we went to the Birmingham Institute, it made me realize how REAL this type of stuff is. The history of black people is real and my generation hasn't experienced the super severe part of racism and certain things our ancestors were oppressed from. We deal with certain things but stuff I have heard and read is beyond disrespectful... The museum opened my eyes wider and made me think more. My friends and I even had a conversation about things that have been done or said to them out of racism. - Janaya

What really creeped me out was the KKK suit donated by the anonymous person. I hope everybody was able to see how lucky we are to live in today's world because it's not as bad as it was back then. We should all be thankful. – Hinde

During segregation and also through slavery, all blacks longed for was freedom and equality but also quality education. Today, so many people take education for granted whether it be just not wanting to learn or skipping or making it difficult for the teachers to teach. We have something our ancestors and grandparents longed for or was hard to get. If they did have the opportunity to go to school it was a challenge to get there. - Sakira

One of the first attractions I saw was School Days. White schools had more money, better buildings, newer textbooks, and teachers with higher pay... The black schools were overcrowded. In 1950, the average class size was 48 vs. 35 in white schools. That same year Alabama spent \$120 on each white child but only \$60 per Black. - Ariyah

On the tour one thing I noticed was the KKK outfit. I got nervous when I saw it. I just couldn't believe that was real. The outfit was yellow. The hat on the outfit had buttons going up to create the cone-shaped hat. The rest of the outfit looked like a gown that went down to your feet. It also had a symbol with the cross on it. I noticed that the sign next to it said, "Anonymous Donation." It made me wonder if someone in the KKK gave it up. - Mariah

Some of the artifacts were very well detailed and it really touched my heart. When I saw the KKK own that made me really think about everything they did to us African Americans, like burning the crosses and lynching. During the short film they showed a black man being hung. That really got to me because it just not okay and should not happen at all no matter what their skin color is. Me and Kaionna had a talk towards the end of everything about the stuff we saw and how we felt about it. It was kind of a deep conversation so I started to tear up because it touched my heart a lot. - Arianna – Arianna

I got to see examples of segregation...along with the work young people during that time period did to fight for their rights. Just like the young people today speaking out against gun violence and school shooting. – Somer

I saw how the water fountains were when blacks and whites were separated. This institute is really touching my heart. Like it is really emotional. I shed tears because it's just so sad. I can't believe what black people went through. They went through so much for us to be where blacks are today. But things still happen to this day. One day I can do something to change this. - Kendra

It's one thing to watch a movie about [segregation] and another thing to actually see everything in person. - Fatuma



We saw a lot of things like the stereotype pictures. They were mainly black people with huge lips eating watermelon or taking care of another white many. They also showed the different water fountains and barber shops. What stood out to me was the KKK outfit. It made me emotional but I just sucked it up because this is real and we can't change the past. And it also makes me think about the racism today because I am African American and I do live in a neighborhood considered for whites. But I'm not going to let it stop me. My skin color is beautiful and I know that. – Kaionna



I think it's important to recognize how lucky we are for all the sacrifices our ancestors made. - Asha

We looked at bus segregation, school segregation, and water fountain segregation. – Nora

Ms. CT told us that her grandfather used to switch the signs on water fountains which would automatically lead to death if caught. – Desy

They have a writing about Rosa Parks sparking the bus boycott which played a role with other women who helped

organize it. Also, we just watched the movie [on the bus] about Rosa Parks and just saw a beautiful model of her sitting on the bus where she refused to give up her seat. - Jamia

We saw two different models of classrooms, the blacks and the whites. White classrooms were so different than blacks. The white classrooms had bright lights and metal desks with white boards. The black classrooms had dull lights and wooden desks with chalk boards. The whites also had tile floor while the colored had wooden floors. – Ra'Quel

The number one story that shocked me was the true story of Emmett Till. I found out that he was brutally beaten by a group of white men until he was dead and his head was thrown into a river... It was because a white lady said that Emmett whistled at her but soon after his death she pleaded guilty and told the truth that he never did. – Asnina

Some other interesting exhibits showed how African American communities thrived even through segregation and unfair treatment. - Caroline

My favorite thing in the museum was the blood mirror. It represents all the gay, bisexual, and transgender men who weren't allowed to give blood even though it could save over 1 million people annually. Here as a mirror filled with blood. There was a mirror filled with blood. That way people had to look at themselves in the blood. – Liz

Gay people weren't allowed to donate blood until 2016. That surprised me the most. - Mariah

Me and Lady Bug [Alaijah] made a video about what we believe in. - Annielia

I really like how they had a station where you get to express how you feel, the rights you stand up for, etc.... I can totally relate because I too have been in a march. It was before Donald Trump became president and it was a rally downtown. I was so scared but I knew I was doing the right thing. The police later came and even started shooting it with paint things. They





hurt really bad. I know it's no where near as bad as the march with the shooting, water spray, and dogs but it's just as scary for both situations. Period. Nobody should ever have to feel like that. - Hinde

It makes me really sad when I see how our people were treated. I just feel that they never deserved anything they got. I always think about what I can do to bring attention to our people. All I can do is better myself, get out of my comfort zone and do things others wouldn't do. It all starts with me. I can make the change and I will. James Lawson said, "We will accept the violence and the hate, absorbing it without returning it." To

me that means that no matter how much hell people put you through, you can take it and make that your motivation to make a difference with returning the hate. #BlackLivesMatter – Ra'Quel

For the first time, I saw MLK give his "I have a dream" speech. It was really cool because I had the opportunity to stand where he stood in D.C. A few years back Girls Inc. went to D.C. Girls Inc. is helping me grow tremendously and showed me life outside of the Midwest. I'm very grateful. – Desy

Birmingham tried to tear down the blacks emotionally, physically, mentally, and spiritually such as engaging activities like the KKK, bombing, and Jim Crow laws. But the black community refused to give up because they believed and had hope that one day the rainy days will be over and the sun will shine bright and they'll be "free at last." Black communities also when to church and sang songs in search of hope. I can relate to that because whenever I'm feeling down or I'm in my feelings, listening to my playlist always makes me feel better. During the tour, I got to see some spooky items such as the bus the Freedom Riders rode that was attacked and set on fire...I also saw the items that remained on one of the little girls who died during the Baptist Church bombing. They displayed the rock that was found in her skull which I thought was really uncomfortable to look at. Seeing that kind of stuff made me thankful for being born in this era. Although we still have racism today, it isn't as bad as back then and we aren't as segregated. – Asha

I had heard about "Jim Crow" but I didn't know where it exactly came from. It came from the title of a well-known minstrel song performed by White men in blackface. I learned more about the stereotype side of things. On postcards, calendars, tobacco tins and toys, the images featured huge red lips, over-sized hips, big eyes, and hair standing on end. - Ariyah





There was a glass case that had items that belong to Denise, the girl that was in the church bombing. There were shoes, the brick that was in her head, bracelet, little book, and two purses. Those items were on her when they found her body. – Jamia

I learned that there were 6 kids who died the day of the Sixteenth St. Baptist Church bombing. 4 girls who were killed from the bomb and 2 boys who were killed by bullets later in the day. One of the boys was riding on the handles of his older brother's bike when he was hit in the chest by 2 bullets from a white boy and his friend who were also riding their bikes. - Jazlyn

When we went by the [16th St. Baptist] church I felt all kind of chills which was crazy. – Asnina

They won't let anyone go inside for respect purposes. Across the street was a memorial for the 4 little girls. The oldest one was fourteen and the youngest was eleven. All were killed in the bombing...I didn't really realize how bad segregation was back then. "If you don't get out of the box you've been in, you wouldn't understand how much bigger the world is." (Angelina Jolie). That kind of applies to his because my mom always told me about how bad segregation was but I never, like, experienced it from an African American's point of view. - Liz

When we got to Memphis we checked into the hotel and went to an amazing bbq place. I got ribs. According to Asia, Memphis is partially known for BBQ. I didn't know that but I guess you learn something new every day. – Liz

We went to a BBQ place. The food was delicious. I also gave the woman a \$5 tip because she looked stressed but she made sure we got all our food right. - Kaionna

June 2, Day 8 – National Civil Rights Institute & Motel Lorraine in Memphis and City Museum in St. Louis

The place itself is just so beautiful it gives you chills. - Hinde



My first “ah” moment was the structure made out of bronze. It was naked humans outlining the United States. It refers to the struggle of others to help move up in life. - Desy

I wanted to say what the sculpture meant [to me]. The brown one with the naked bodies climbing on it. What I thought the statue symbolized was that even in our divided country, every equal being has the same goal of reaching the top. Some people may be higher than others but no one truly has any more power than the person at the bottom. – Famo

I could not help but notice the sculpture. When you first look at it, it shows how we

are all connected and how we all struggle together as one to become whole and be equal. – Taylor B.

As we walked through the door there was a sculpture. At first, I didn’t think anything of it but when our tour guide started explaining what it meant and how it showed the climb of people to get to the top I realized the world will never stop stepping on you unless you get to the top. It angers me to think the world is this way and how hard free blacks had to work then and still do. – Asia

All of the artifacts and audio recordings let me be there in the 1960’s watching Martin Luther King and other fighters bring justice to black people. - Somer

We got to see a timeline of the beginning of slavery to the end. Slaves were kept at the bottom of ships and packed together like sardines. Some didn’t make it due to poor conditions. – Asha

In 1760, one male slave could be purchased on the Guinea Coast for 6 ounces of gold or the equivalent of: 2 muskets, 40 pounds of gun powder, 1 anklet, 5 pieces of cotton cloth, 2 iron bars, 1 copper bar, 4 pieces of linen cloth, 1 pewter basin, 20 pounds of cowrie shells. - Ariyah

I was mad when I saw the slaves chained on the floor of a ship. I almost cried but I remembered to stay strong and keep my head up just like them. - Anisea

One of the exhibits I found most interesting was the one about slavery and how everyone but the slaves benefitted. It talked about the North made money from stocking and creating slave ships. And how the South had been gaining the most amount of money from cotton production. – Caroline

I remember reading about the Dred Scott case and a lot of the stuff I saw I



remember learning in my African American history class. I love to learn about history. It's really my favorite class. I take a history class as an elective every year for school.... I think it is important that we educate ourselves and others about this and not just blacks but all races. This is America. - Janaya

There was...a movie we watched about the struggle for and to freedom. - Jamia

This museum was so beautiful. It has 25 exhibits...I learned the motel was owned by a white couple in a black area. Business wasn't going too well. Then a black couple bought it making it the only black owned motel in Memphis. - Desy

I can now say I stood where MLK once did. - Vic'Taijah

Walking through the Lorraine Motel - it gave me the shivers. The church music playing made me feel like I was at a funeral. It is an honor as a child to see MLK's last day on earth. At first, I thought it was fake because he was a pastor and there were cigarette butts until Somer told me that he did smoke cigarettes which was very surprising. - Taylor B.

I learned from the tour guide that people stopped going to that Motel because Martin Luther King died at that Motel. I like that instead of taking down the Motel completely, they made it into a museum. - Lacy

We had the opportunity to see the hotel/motel Dr. King got shot and killed at. The motel was named Lorraine, named after a black couple that bought it from white people. - Ra'Quel

We got to see where Dr. King got shot at his motel building, room 306. It was a very heart-chilling moment. - Fartunay

Seeing his hotel, it was like, dang, it really happened right there. I'm grateful for being able to go on this trip because some people won't get the opportunity I have by being a Girls Inc. member....I love learning by being outside of school because it seems like I have a whole other mind I didn't know about. Learning can be fun, especially if it is something you are interested in. - Kendra

A cool thing about this museum was the motel was the museum, they just remodeled everything. I liked that the museum had different time periods in different parts and areas. When you get to the hotel part, I was really touched by what I saw. The [plaque] we were reading said the stuff he did before the shooting. He was just a normal guy, talking to his friends and telling jokes. It even said that he asked the band to play his favorite song and they were playing that song in the museum. - Taylor M.



We saw where James Earl Ray was when he shot him. James was in the building across from the motel hiding in the bathroom when he shot MLK in the neck. - Jazlyn

I felt very sad. - Dahrma

My favorite exhibit had to be the bus. We were able to sit and hear audio of a white bus driver yell for a colored woman to move. – Desy



...he told us to get off the bus before we got arrested. - Ebony

In one exhibit they had a model of one of the sit-ins that happened during the civil rights movement. - Jamia

The most interesting part of that tour was when we got to see where MLK was assassinated. It was a sad visit. There was a little circular bouquet in his room, 306, there were 2 queen beds, 3 cigarette trays, a tray of food in between the beds, and a glass of some sort of soda or maybe beer. – Liz

My favorite part was when we went to Martin Luther King's motel room. I that was so cool how they left the room how it was when MLK was killed. I actually learned that he smoked cigarettes a lot. I also learned where he was shot because they don't teach us a lot in textbooks. Then we went to the museum across the street. That was the building where shots were fired to Martin Luther King's motel room. He was actually shot on a balcony inf front of his room. - Mariah

We got to see his [MLK's] hotel room and his shooter's motel room. It was really sad because there [were] all of these quotes describing how Ms. Kin and her kids felt when they heard Martin passed away. - Nora

I got to see an exhibit of how the African slaves where chained up on the floor of boats. It scared me for a quick second because I thought they were real people. These exhibits make you so eager to want to do something. Out of all the museums we went to, they all taught me to stand up for what I believe in even if I'm standing alone. Soon people will see that what you are doing will make a change and they will join you. I am Strong, Smart, and Bold and I won't take less than what I deserve. #MakeAChange #Believe – Ra'Quel

This museum was a great experience. Everyone should visit it, especially brown little girls so they know Black Is Beautiful! – Ariyah



The teachers let us pick out a t-shirt. I picked out a black shirt that said "You can kill the dreamer, but not the dream." And I LOVE it! I want to thank the teachers for getting those for us. – Nora

The staff let us each pick out a shirt. I would like to take a moment to thank them. Thank you so much for putting up with 42 teen girls and then buying us stuff. - Liz

It was fun hanging out with someone new which was Haunnah. She's a great person to be around, great energy to have fun with. – Asnina

...Me and Lacy were drawing each other and I think mine turned out pretty well. – Nora

In St. Louis we went to the coolest museum I have ever been to. I felt like 6-year-old Desy again. I was able to crawl and climb in small areas. But my knees were a reminder that I wasn't that young any more...I even got stuck at one point and my friends had to pull me through a hole. - Desy

Today we went to the City Museum and it was very fun. There were a lot of things to do. – Makayla

That was the best museum I have ever been to...Me and my group went to the caves. It was so fun. The caves were a little scary because some of them were so little and you weren't sure if it was a cave or not. I had the time of my life because I love climbing. – Mariah

The City Museum had so much art and it was very creative. – Taylor M.

It was basically a huge playground for adults...A lot of the stuff seemed recycled which I think is amazing because it is always better to reuse than to waste. There were a lot of holes and crawling places you had to get through which was very uncomfortable yet fun for me. - Asha

Next, we went to the City Museum. It was like a huge jungle gym...Lacy, Nora, Asia, and I spent most of the time in this, like, American Ninja Warrior place. There was a rope over a mini-canyon. You had to swing over it, then run and climb up a huge wall. - Liz



It was hard but fun because it was a lot of climbing and some places I got stuck. – Angel

The City Museum was crazy fun! We were climbing on all these fun metal things. It reminded me of a dump you would see in a movie because it was all rusted and random. – Nora

I faced my fear of heights. I got stuck in the tunnels like seven times. My whole group had to help me. Then I lost a shoe so Annielia had to go back in the tunnels to go get it. – Ebony



While being there I felt like a child which I loved. I mean who doesn't love feeling young all over again? - Fartunay

It was fun. Especially when I was with the funnest group...My favorite part was Christian the Magician. He was funny and his magic was entertaining. – Haunnah

The magic looked so real. The man was so funny. – Anisea

The City Museum was interesting. To me it was creepy because it had people coming from any and every hole. I thought I was going to get kidnapped. - Janaya

Whoever planned City Museum did good. - Nicoletta

The City Museum was a lot of climbing and crawling everywhere and it was kind of scary sometimes, too. - Caroline

My favorite attraction on the trip by far was the City Museum. I felt like a 5-year-old at Chuck E. Cheese. I really enjoyed the architecture of the museum... I can say it was a big workout and I actually broke a sweat meaning that I need to work out more. – Taylor B.

The City Museum was a blast. And you don't just crawl around, you climb, snake, and roll which leads you to different locations each time. I found some of the tunnels very tight at times and hot but it was still fun to go through the different tunnels and slide down the different slides. - Somer

So many holes. Too many holes. When I crawled in one, 100 more appeared. At one point I feared for my life because of how lost I was but eventually it seemed thrilling. If you were watching me at the time, I was giggling like a school girl at how fun it was to watch everyone struggle to fit in one small space... Everyone was happy and that made me glad since this is our last official event on the trip. I'm glad everyone enjoyed it. – Famo



I was hot and sweaty but it was one of the funnest things I have done in along time. I felt like I was a little kid all over again. – Kendra

It was the last day of the trip. I'm going to miss my roommates (Ladybug, Tamia, Nora, and Makayla).
- Araya

June 3, Day 9 – Travel Day home to Omaha



Today is a good day because we are going back home. I was also in a good mood this morning. I woke up early to get ready. I helped load the bus as did others. Thanks to the girls who helped out with what they could during this trip. Thanks to Ms. CT for continuing on with the trips because if it wasn't for her I wouldn't be traveling the world right now because I will continue to go on as many trips as I can. Thanks to Ms. Roberta for coming on the trip and helping to regulate the overall things. Thanks to Ms. Bev for taking time off her regular job to help out with the kids. Thanks to Ms. Sheebie for keeping track of the money, also for being funny and making me laugh. Thanks to my Mom for paying money for me to go on this

trip. It wasn't easy so I appreciate that. Thanks to my Dad for also helping to pay for this trip. If it wasn't for my mom and dad paying I wouldn't be going on this trip. I give an overall thanks to the donors for giving the most money to us so we could even go on this trip. They paid \$1,600 [per girl] so that we could explore everything young. So, they get the big thanks. #Mom&DAD #MsRoberta #MsCT #MsBev #MsSheebie #Donors #Brothers #YOLO #MONEYMONEYMONEYYY

I, Fatima Ibrahim [Famo], would like to sincerely thank all the staff, donors, and parents that helped and provided money/materials for the production of this year's Girls Inc. Trip to Florida. Whatever your kind services, I, as well as many other girls, wouldn't have been able to come and enjoy such a great time at all of our destinations. Thank you especially for letting me visit Disneyland for the first time. Honestly, I have never been to a theme park outside of Nebraska and I'm happy that a Disney park was my first. It was an emotional experience that I will never forget... I greatly appreciated being able to learn about my black history. Thank you again for letting me be here and, hopefully, for years to come. – Famo





...I am going to miss some of these people, like my friends that I...won't see. Even though we all have rough times at the start, I had fun on this trip. I want to thank Ms. CT for letting me go on this trip. I got to learn about some new things, things I never knew, on the trip...I want to thank all the staff...[Also] my

mom and my caseworker because they paid for me to go on this trip. – Dahrma

I'm so sad that the trip is over. I had a blast even though I got frustrated a lot. I still had a good time and I got my family lots of souvenirs...I enjoyed everything. Not one thing wasn't fun. And I have Ms. Roberta, Ms. CT, Ms. Bev, and Ms. Sheebie to thank for that...I really have to thank all the donors that donated money to the trip. I couldn't be more grateful. So, I just want to say thank you and I hope I can go again next year. THANK YOU. – Vic'Taijah

Last but not least I want to take the time to thank Girls Inc. for letting me come and all the donors and sponsors for helping out. I want to say ninyay ("thank you") to the bus driver for getting us places safe and sound. And thanks to all the tour guides. – Asnina

I am thankful for my cousin Nikki for allowing me to go on this trip because she told me about it and paid for it and she is a really good cousin to have. – Angel

It seems like I bonded more with my friends. I really learned more things about them. I thought I knew them so well but I guess I didn't. I love learning about all kinds of history but black history is my favorite. The museums were probably my favorite parts of the trip. I want to thank you all for putting up with not just all 41 of the other girls but for me, too, because I know I am difficult to deal with. Thanks for the good time and the life lesson: pay attention and be on time or there will be consequences. I am sure I will be back. - Janaya

I would like to thank all of the sponsors, everyone who gave money, and all of the staff on the trip for making this trip possible. I would also like to thank Ms. Emily Mwaja for my spending money. Without her, I would not be the young lady I am today. She has become like a second mother. Ms. Emily has been my mentor since I was about eight years old and I hope to have her until I am grown with kids to help me along. So, thank you all for everything – the money, the spot on the trip, the staff, and my beloved mentor. – Asia



The person I would want to thank most is my mom. She put so much into making this trip possible for me along with the donors & funders. They could have put their time and money elsewhere but instead decided to put it towards me and the trip. – Somer

I would like to thank my mom for giving me the opportunity to go on this trip. My mom works very hard and she always wants the best for me. I would also like to thank Girls Inc. because it takes a village to raise a child and Girls Inc. is a part of my village. I'm happy they gave [42] young girls a chance to see life outside of Omaha and the facts that we learn in

school in person & up front. I would also like to thank the donors because they have a big part in this, too. They believe that we – young girls – can make a change and we can strive. – Taylor M.

I am so grateful to be on the trip. First of all, I want to thank the people that donated money for the trip. I also want to thank the people that donated the ponchos and food. Thank you Ms. CT, Ms. Bev, Ms. Sheebie, and Ms. Roberta for coming on the trip and making sure we have a good time. Thank you, Mr. Absalom, for driving us to our hotels and rest stops because without you we would be driving around in circles. Thank you, Ms. Bev, for giving me my medicine. Thank you, Ms. Sheebie, for leaving Hawaii to go on a trip with us. Thank you Ms. Roberta for staying up late to read our journals. Thank you, Ms. CT, for going on a trip with us. - Lacy

I want to give a big thanks to the chaperones on the trip and thanks for putting up with us this trip. I know that I caused a big delay in the beginning of the trip and ever since then was very cautious of time. My mistake made me more aware of my surroundings and time. It was a lesson learned. – Taylor B.

I would also like to thank Ms. CT because I was very sad I could not attend the trip due to financial stability at home but I worked up the courage and asked if I could come and because of Ms. CT and the Girls Inc. team I got the chance to attend my first Girls Inc. trip. It truly was a blessing getting a chance to come and I am more than grateful for the experience. – Anonymous

I am so grateful and thankful for being a part of the Girls Inc. trip. I want to thank Girls Inc. and my mentor for making this possible for me. Much Love - Fartunay

I want to thank my Aunt Nikki for helping me go on this trip. She got her work to pay for me and Angel to go and gave us some money for food/spending. She also made sure we had everything we need like toothbrushes, shampoo, sunscreen, etc....I also want to thank Ms. CT for allowing us to come and all the other staff. The trip was very fun and educational and I can't wait to share my stories/pictures with my family back home. - Jazlyn

This trip was fun and full of memories. I got closer to my friends. I'd like to thank:

- The staff for all the hard work put into the trip.
- Donors for making it happen.
- My mom & Quita for paying for my trip and needs.
- My father for my spending money.
- My grandma for the snacks she donated. - Desy



Today is a special day because we are going home.! It's about 12:00 and my eye is still bothering me. Ms. Sheebie gave me some eyedrops and that helped for a little bit but it just feels like there's something under my eye. It may be an eyelash or a scratch in my cornea. All I know is I can't really do anything now and that's kinda frustrating. – Nora

On this trip I wasn't to thank the staff that made this trip possible for us. Without them we wouldn't have been to so many cool places and able to explore half the world. Also, the girls that went on this trip made it fun and we got to meet new people. Thank you, donors. And also Ms. Joselyn for helping me go on this trip. – Habiba

I'd like to thank Ms. CT for talking my dad into letting me go. I'd like to thank my dad and my god dad for letting me go on this trip. I'd also like to thank myself for not letting anybody get in the way of what I want to do. – Annielia

I want to thank Ms. CT for this trip we are on. And thank you for paying for me and giving me some spending money. I really appreciate the opportunity. – Ebony

This whole trip was fun. I can't wait til next year. - Anisea



Honestly, I thank my previous mentor and her family for making this trip possible for me when they didn't have to. Not only did I have a lot of fun but I learned a lot and can't wait to share my knowledge with my friends back home. – Asha

I had a very good trip despite the drama. We made it. We did it. We had fun. I met lots of new girls and tried lots of new things. I love Girls Inc. Thanks to everyone that made this trip possible for me. I wouldn't be here without them. – Fatuma

I want to thank my mom, dad, and grandma for this trip. The end. – Alaijah

Thank you

- To the people who made the plans of this trip and the hotel reservations.
- CT for taking us on this trip and the wonderful opportunity.
- Roberta for the hotel check ins and the journal awards. And taking us on this trip.
- Bev – For my meds and coming on this trip.
- Sheebie – for being my favorite staff. And being the most fun staff. Also, for the pickles and the PB & J's.

I loved this trip. It was fun getting away from Nebraska and going to so many museums and amusement parks. - Haunnah

Although it's bittersweet, I'm glad to say this is my last trip. I've experienced so many things on the numerous trips I've been on. I've created so many memories that I'll remember forever. I am also privileged to go on this trip. - Sakira

I am thankful for everyone who made this trip possible for me. It's a special thanks to all the chaperones that had to deal with 42 girls. I can't imagine the fear and worry they felt when we went places where there were a lot of people. They did everything to keep us safe. When we got in trouble, they just wanted to protect us. Also, I want to thank my mom for even letting me go. I have never been away from my mom this long and I know she missed my presence but thank you again for letting me go on this trip. It was a pleasure while it lasted. Also, thanks to the bus driver for taking us where we needed to go. –Kendra

This trip was really fun. I'm so proud of myself. Usually I have to thank someone for donating and helping me with the payment with the trip. I still do today but I want to say that I'm really proud of myself. I found a job and was able to pay for myself this trip. Not only was I responsible but I was also





grateful. I am so happy that I got to be on this trip. I learned even more than I thought I did. I want to say thank you Ms. CT & Roberta for even making this trip possible for us. I want to thank Ms. Bev and Ms. Sheebie for helping out and making sure we were OK @ all times...It gets better every year. – Hinde



Gallery of Journal Doodles

