

# GELI 2026 SUMMIT AGENDA

9:30 AM 10:30 AM	REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST UMASS AMHERST CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM DOORS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT 9:30AM
10:30 AM 11:00 AM	WELCOME REMARKS CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM
11:15 AM 12:15 PM	SESSION I OPTIONS
12:30 PM 1:30 PM	SESSION II OPTIONS
1:30 PM 2:30 PM	LUNCH AND NETWORKING CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM
2:45 PM 4:00 PM	LISTENING SESSIONS & BREAKOUTS
4:15 PM 5:00 PM	CLOSING REMARKS AND CALL TO ACTION CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM



**Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative 2026**  
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# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

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## **From Story to Power: Turning Your Voice, Wellness, and Passion into Leadership**

This interactive workshop helps young women understand how their lived experiences and wellness practices connect to leadership and advocacy. Through guided reflection, small-group discussion, and low-pressure public speaking activities, participants will build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and leave with a clear action step for using their voice.

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## **Use Your Voice: The Skills Every Girl Needs to Be Heard**

This workshop teaches real-life communication skills girls need to express themselves clearly, confidently, and without apology—in friendships, relationships, family, school, and work.

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## **Civic 101: Your Role and Power**

Are you a young person looking to lead, change something in your community, or generally mad at the world? Come join the Massachusetts Voter Table to learn about the systems of government and ways you can unlock your inner activist and lead change!

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## **Everyday Philanthropists: Claiming Power, Voice, and Choice**

This interactive workshop helps young people recognize themselves as philanthropists by exploring how they already use their time, resources, and voices to create change. Through reflection, discussion, and a playful advocacy game, participants identify causes they care about, practice values-based decision-making, and experience the power of collective action. The session builds confidence, connection, and a shared understanding that philanthropy and leadership are accessible, everyday practices—not just institutional roles.

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## **Leading with Self-Compassion**

This workshop invites young women leaders to reframe self-care through the lens of self-compassion, emphasizing how we speak to ourselves while leading, learning, and growing. Participants will explore the internal pressures many girls carry and learn practical strategies to lead with kindness, confidence, and emotional resilience. The session empowers participants to show up fully without burning out or shrinking themselves.



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## **The Leader Within Me**

This session will help youth recognize the leadership qualities they already possess by challenging participants to think outside the box of what they think being a leader is. Through interactive scenarios and reflection, participants will build confidence within their voices and discuss actionable solutions they can create in their everyday life. With the goal of redefining what it means to be a leader, making advocacy feel more accessible, and encouraging small, meaningful actions within their communities, this workshop embraces participants' unique identities and skill sets as a key component of changing the world around them. The workshop will be co-facilitated by Shirley Edgerton along with Sadiya Quetti-Goodson and Mirabai Dyson.

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## **Brave Voices, Strong Communities: Civic Leadership & Conflict Skills for Teens**

Conflict is part of leadership -- and learning how to navigate it is a superpower. This workshop introduces participants to practical, youth-friendly conflict resolution tools and helps them practice communication strategies they can use in school, at work, and in their communities.

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## **Interviewing in the Digital Era**

During this session, participants will have the opportunity to network with staff members from New England Public Media: Elizabeth Román (Executive Editor of News), Donyel Le'Noir Felton (Education Program Coordinator & Ismary Santiago-Lugo (Director of Education).

We will then move into two mini lessons:

1. Framing video with your phone (filming horizontal vs vertical and using the “rule of thirds”
  2. Drafting basic and must-ask questions for video interviews. Finally, participants will have the opportunity to practice the skills learned by interviewing each other using their phones.
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## Connecting Breath with Body Movement: Beginner Yoga Flow

Connecting Breath with Body Movement: Beginner Yoga Flow is a 30-minute workshop designed to introduce participants to the relationship between breath and movement. Through simple, flowing pose sequences, attendees will explore how fluid motions support conscious breathing and body awareness. Participants are welcome to learn the names of pose sequences, helping them build familiarity and confidence as they develop a practice to regulate the nervous system and manage stress and anxiety. In the end, we come together in an open discussion about how it feels to move mindfully into powerful and healing postures, and how to incorporate appreciation of breath and movement into daily life.

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## Scroll, Pause, Reflect — A Social Media & Mental Health Workshop

This 45-minute workshop helps girls explore how social media impacts their emotions, confidence, and mental health. Through interactive scenarios and reflection, participants learn to recognize triggers, set healthy boundaries, and make empowered choices online. By the end, each girl walks away with practical “power moves” to protect her mental well-being and create a more positive social media experience.

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# What is GELI?

## The Girls Empowerment Leadership Initiative!

The MCSW is committed to building the future of the Commonwealth – starting by investing in our girls and gender-expansive youth. The Girls Empowerment and Leadership Initiative (GELI) seeks to empower young women ages 14-22, across the Commonwealth to advocate for themselves and their communities. This initiative focuses on developing leadership and civic engagement skills through educational workshops, skill-building opportunities, and the opportunity to connect with peers across the state.



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