



## Girl AGain Comes to Rockland

Nonprofit American Girl Resale Shop Opens Second Location Inside  
BRIDGES' Independence Café – A Unique Boutique at the Palisades Center Mall

### PRESS ADVISORY

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August 14, 2023 – West Nyack. Two powerhouse nonprofits have joined forces to bring Girl AGain, an American Girl resale shop, to the Palisades Center Mall. Yes She Can, Inc. and BRIDGES will embark on an exciting collaboration in support of women with Autism and persons with disabilities. The Grand Welcoming Celebration takes place at 10 AM on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at the BRIDGES' Independence Café – A Unique Boutique in the Palisades Center Mall. Rockland County Executive Ed Day and Westchester County Executive George Latimer will be on hand to launch the celebration.

Replicating Girl AGain's flagship on a smaller scale, BRIDGES' Independence Café – A Unique Boutique will stock authentic, gently used American Girl dolls, clothing, furniture, accessories, and books that have been cleaned and prepared for sale at good prices. Items will be restocked regularly. Proceeds from sales will support both nonprofits and their respective missions.

Girl AGain is a subsidiary of Yes We Can, the Westchester-based nonprofit organization founded in 2013 that teaches and develops job skills for young women with autism. The boutique specifically helps develop transferable job skills for young women with autism. Trainees at Girl AGain sort, clean and prepare the merchandise, price it, and display it in the shop. They learn about marketing, merchandising, retailing, customer service, and inventory acquisition in addition to appropriate workplace behavior, research, collaboration, and decision-making.

BRIDGES' Independence Café – A Unique Boutique opened July 1, 2021 as the storefront to BRIDGES headquarters, housed on the second floor of the Palisades Center Mall in West Nyack, twelfth largest in the U.S. The Boutique sells unique gift items such as scented candles, soaps, artwork, cards, and clothing made by and for people with disabilities, Veterans, and people formerly involved in the justice system. BRIDGES, founded in 1987 under the name Rockland Independent Living Center (RILC), is a community-based, peer-driven, cross-disability, not-for-profit organization dedicated to advocacy and leadership on behalf of people with disabilities, Veterans, and people formerly involved in the justice system.

"Yes She Can is honored to join forces with BRIDGES and bring Girl AGain to BRIDGES' Independent Café - A Unique Boutique," says Yes She Can, Inc.'s Executive Director Robin Davies-Small. "Together, our non-

profit organizations will be able to provide services to more individuals looking to gain independence and strive to reach their fullest potential while also providing Palisades Center Mall customers access to high-quality refurbished American Girl Dolls and accessories.” Davies ended by saying, "The proceeds from this collaboration will support both organizations to further their valued missions."

BRIDGES CEO Carlos Martinez said, “BRIDGES is thrilled to collaborate with Yes She Can, Inc. to bring Girl AGain to our retail space, The Independence Café – A Unique Boutique. The missions of our two organizations align well, making this venture a wonderful opportunity for everyone. Workforce training and supports for entrepreneurs are vital for our organizations’ clients and their journeys to attain or regain their independence. Our retail location in the Palisades Center Mall offers a convenient location for shoppers from around the region to fulfill their American Girl Doll dreams.”

“BRIDGES is near and dear to my heart and to the hearts of many in our community as they remain dedicated to removing barriers for people with special needs,” said Rockland County Executive Ed Day. “This organization’s tireless commitment to economic independence and employment for individuals with disabilities is truly inspiring. I encourage all our residents to visit BRIDGES’ Independence Café for a look at their Girl AGain’s merchandise of which proceeds will support these incredible nonprofits and their respective missions.”

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: "We are proud to join together with our partners in Rockland County to bring Girl AGain to the Palisades Center Mall. Yes She Can Inc., which was founded in Westchester County in 2013, teaches essential job skills to young women with autism. Girl AGain boutique, is the venue for the Yes She Can job skills development program where the trainees can learn marketing and merchandising, customer service, workplace behavior and more. The Girl AGain boutique sells refurbished American Girl dolls and accessories. I thank Yes She Can, Inc. and BRIDGES for their dedication on behalf of people with disabilities, and I hope young girls from across the region take advantage of all this program has to offer."

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