



A Message From CEO Debbie Rich And Board Chair Cheryl Horvath

Dear Girl Scouts, Volunteers, Friends, and Families,

Cheryl and I are sure that you have seen today's news that the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) plans to open its membership to girls in 2018, and wanted to reach out to all of you, our Girl Scout family, to affirm our dedication to the Girl Scout Movement and our mission.

Girl Scouts remains committed to and believes strongly in the importance of the all-girl, girl-led, and girl-friendly environment that Girl Scouts provides, which creates a necessary safe space for girls to learn and thrive. We hear from our girls and their families every day about the value of the incredible experiences we offer them, including in STEM, outdoor, entrepreneurship, and life-skills programming. And thousands of exceptional Girl Scouts earn their Gold Award each year, Girl Scouting's highest award, becoming Gold Award Girl Scouts by transforming an idea and vision for change into an actionable plan with measurable, sustainable, and far-reaching impact at the local, national, and global levels.

The benefit of this type of girl-centered environment has been well-documented by educators, scholars, and other girl- and youth-serving organizations, as well as Girl Scouts themselves. We are dedicated to ensuring that girls are able to take advantage of a program tailored specifically to their unique developmental needs. Only Girl Scouts has more than 100 years of experience helping girls tap into their leadership potential by reinforcing and extending the skills they learn in school in a supportive, encouraging environment in which they feel safe to just be themselves. **At Girl Scouts, we are girl experts**, and we work every day to help girls develop the courage, confidence, and character necessary to make the world a better place.

Girl Scouts is, and will remain, the scouting program that truly benefits U.S. girls by providing a safe space for them to learn and lead. And, around the world, the vast majority of Girl Scouts and Girl Guides are in single-gender organizations. Last week during our G.I.R.L. 2017 convention, nearly 8,000 girls and those who support their healthy development—including incredible and inspiring speakers, our dedicated volunteers, alumnae, and leaders from across our Movement, as well as many from the general public—came together from all over our country and across the globe to celebrate and amplify the incredible power of every G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader) in our Movement.

Our programs are research- and evidence-based and, from this research, we know that Girl Scouts excel in important aspects of life. In fact, a report that the Girl Scout Research Institute published this past summer, [*The Girl Scout Impact Study*](#), shows that



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participating in Girl Scouts helps girls develop key leadership skills they need to be successful in life. Compared to their peers, Girl Scouts are more likely than non-Girl Scouts to be leaders because they:

- Have confidence in themselves and their abilities (80% vs. 68 %)
- Act ethically and responsibly, and show concern for others (75% vs. 59%)
- Seek challenges and learn from setbacks (62% vs. 42%)
- Develop and maintain healthy relationships (60% vs. 43%)
- Identify and solve problems in their communities (57% vs. 28%)
- Take an active role in decision making (80% vs. 51%)

We are so proud of our Southern Arizona Girl Scouts and volunteers, and everything you do to unleash your inner go-getters, innovators, risk-takers, and leaders, and achieve your goals and dreams. Simply put, we know that Girl Scouts works, and we look forward to continuing together on our mission to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

On our honor,
Debbie and Cheryl

Debbie Rich, CEO of Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona
Cheryl Horvath, Board Chair of Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona