



## REMARKS from the PRESIDENT, Faye Fields April 18, 2020

Thank you for joining us in this new way for the 2020 Annual Meeting. I think we all have a deeper appreciation for our theme this year: **Bold Leaders**.

We all need everyone to work together, as a community, to move forward during these difficult times. I feel that in many ways that is exactly what Girl Scouts prepares girls (and adults) to do.

I believe the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is **essential**. Girls are learning to be courageous in the face of adversity, innovative in times of pause and relentless when pursuing their dreams. In other words, **Bold Leaders**.

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your board president. It has been six amazing years. You have allowed me to re-engage with an organization that was so important to me as a girl growing up in Ohio. And, in so doing, I have gained a new appreciation for what it's like to be a G.I.R.L. I am proud that together we are all go-getters, innovators, risk-takers and leaders.

April is volunteer appreciation month, and I want you to know how much I appreciate you, our dedicated volunteers. Especially in the last several weeks I have been struck by how dedicated you are to ensure that our Girl Scouts are making a difference. I want to specifically celebrate every **troop leader, Service Unit Manager, Adult Trainer, Cookie Manager, Camp and SHARE Volunteer**—all volunteers, for being the secret sauce in the work that we do to empower every girl. You keep this organization strong and vibrant. **[applause]**

During my six years as your board president, I have seen the passion that lies within each of you. The amazing work you do to inspire our girls to take on world problems and find solutions, like our Gold Award Girl Scouts. Your ability to supply strategic support, and yes even garage space, for the largest girl-led business, our **Cookie program**. You lead camping trips, teach archery, travel the globe to World Centers with 20-30 Girl Scout teens in tow. Your passion for all things Girl Scouts truly makes a difference. In the lives of girls.

When we said girls were not pursuing **STEM**, you put on your goggles and gloves and helped girls enjoy science, technology, engineering and math. You are incredible!

I am also moved by your unwavering commitment. It is a fact that there is a lack of investment in women and girl philanthropy. Women's issues receive only 1.6 percent of total charitable giving for nonprofits that help women and girls. In the Washington region giving to youth organizations is down. And that is a problem.

I want to thank our board for their leadership and work to increase Girl Scouts' visibility and partnership with corporations and foundation. This was especially clear in funding our **EXPO**. Last November, we had 15 corporations that made not only financial contributions to our Council but sent their employees to help build an unforgettable day.

And I especially want to thank you our volunteers, families and friends who so generously give to our **SHARE** campaign, ensuring that Girl Scouting can happen for every girl who wants to join.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) has hurt many of our fundraising plans. Cancellation of events like Girl Scout Day at the Nationals in April, our Congressional Sweet Success fundraiser at UPS, and we know that many of your SHARE service unit events have also been canceled. All has a direct financial impact on our Council.

We are grateful that many of our funders have allowed us to redirect funding to support our newly created virtual programming. A special shout-out to **HPE** (Hewlett Packard Enterprise) for sponsoring this meeting and helping to underwrite all our virtual troop meetings.

We are well aware that the need for financial assistance will only increase due to the impact this pandemic is having on our economy. That is why our Council is joining the effort for Giving Tuesday, on May 5<sup>th</sup>, a global day of giving for nonprofits. Our campaign will support financial assistance for Girl Scouts so they are able to continue their Girl Scout journey.

We have also secured a \$25,000 matching grant to enhance every gift received. If you are able, make a contribution to Girl Scouts Nation's Capital. You can make your gift on our website by clicking the donate tab. Let's ensure that SHARE is there for all girls and their families who need our help to continue their Girl Scout experience.

As I reflect over my time as president, and close this chapter of service, I want you to know that this Council is great, not just because it is big or influential, but because our members understand the mission -- to build girls of courage, confidence and character. We do this by giving girls something bigger and better to aspire to. We believe that girls are our hope for a brighter future. That they can change the world. And it shows.

When I stood before you six years ago, I promised to expand philanthropy and give our girls amazing experiences. I am happy to report, mission accomplished.

Thank you for your dedication to Girl Scouting in the Greater Washington Region. Thank you all for allowing me to serve as your board president and to reconnect with my inner G.I.R.L. I wish you continued success. Thank you and stay safe.