

Lidia Soto-Harmon leaving Girl Scouts of Nation's Capital



Longtime Girl Scouts Nation's Capital CEO [Lidia Soto-Harmon](#) announced today she's leaving after a dozen years in her seat for a national nonprofit role atop the Student Conservation Association.

Effective April 24, she'll serve as president and CEO of the Arlington nonprofit that's geared toward growing the next generation of environmental stewards around the country.

“I kind of married my passion for youth development [with] my passion for the planet,” said Soto-Harmon, who in all spent 18 years at the local girl's leadership council. “It takes all the incredible learnings I had in Girl Scouts and puts them at a national level for me, which I think is really exciting.”

She will depart April 22, at which point [Colleen Cibula](#), current chief operating officer for Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, has been appointed acting CEO by board President [Barbara Krumsiek](#). Soto-Harmon said the board will kick off a nationwide search for her permanent replacement — and believes Cibula will be among those considered for the post.

Girl Scouts Nation's Capital is the largest such council in the country, with 76,800 youth and adult members in D.C., Virginia and Maryland, an operating budget of more than \$18 million and 120 employees across seven offices.

The Meyer Foundation, where Soto-Harmon served as a board member for 10 years, has made a \$50,000 contribution that will help establish an endowment at the Girl Scouts in her name in recognition of her commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. They'll seek matching funds to raise \$100,000 to underwrite projects like Encuentro de Chicas Latinas, a leadership conference for middle and high school girls, and other Girl Scout programs that help the community.



Encuentro de Chicas Latinas is an annual conference aimed at young immigrant girls to learn about self esteem and leadership.

The endowment will be named Con Corazón, meaning “with heart” in Spanish, Soto-Harmon’s signature tagline that appears on a personal patch Girl Scouts can earn by

taking a selfie with her. She has 6,904 Girl Scout selfies on her phone — and still counting.



In a letter sent to volunteers Thursday morning, Soto-Harmon wrote that she would “remain steadfast in my support of Girl Scouts as a supporter, a fan and, most importantly, a donor.” But, she noted in an interview, there's a surprising amount of overlap between her present and future employer.

“Every woman that I’ve met so far on the board of the Student Conservation Association — they learned environmental stewardship from being Girl Scouts,” she said.

Soto-Harmon first joined the local Girl Scouts council as chief operating officer, taking on the CEO's role 12 years ago. During her tenure, she oversaw the celebration of the nonprofit's 100th birthday on the National Mall in 2012, an event she estimated drew close 250,000 and was the largest gathering ever for the organization. She was named a Washington Business Journal [Women Who Mean Business honoree](#) that same year.