



GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL

63rd ANNUAL MEETING

APRIL 5, 2025

MINUTES

The 63rd Annual Meeting of Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital (the "Council," "GSCNC," or "Girl Scouts Nation's Capital") was held on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at The National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia.

The opening ceremony, which included the flag ceremony, Pledge of Allegiance, singing of the National Anthem, and presentation of Association flags, was carried out under the leadership of a GSCNC Team Member and two Girl Scout Ambassadors. Following the opening ceremony, Council President, Barbara Krumsiek, thanked the Girl Scout members and chairs from Association 70 in Loudoun County for hosting the meeting.

Members, participants, and visitors were welcomed, including two members of the National Board of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA): Marcus Peacock and Trooper Sanders. Current Council Board Members were recognized for generously committing their time and talents to ensure that the Council remains strong.

Barbara noted that the theme of the meeting was "*Being a Sister to Every Girl Scout*" and that throughout the meeting we would hear from several Girl Scouts on the importance of Being a Sister to Every Girl Scout.

Barbara then called the business meeting to order at 10:07 AM and introduced Wendy White, Secretary of the Board of Directors, who was serving as Parliamentarian for the meeting, and Kim R. Ford, Chief Executive Officer.

CREDENTIALS REPORT

Two Girl Scouts serving on the Credentials Committee reported that, as of 9:13 AM, 231 voting members of the Council were present and 113 of 127 Service Units were represented. The Credentials Committee verified that a quorum was present and that all voting members were active members of the Girl Scout movement, 14 years of age or over, and registered through Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, fulfilling the requirements to conduct business as stated in the Council Bylaws.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, RULES OF ORDER, and MINUTES from 2024 Annual Meeting

Barbara asked everyone to review the Agenda and Rules of Order in the digital program or on the screens on the stage at the meeting. She noted that the Annual Meeting minutes for April 20, 2024, were posted on the website for review prior to the meeting.

Motion: On motion duly made and seconded, the agenda and rules of order to govern the meeting, along with the Annual Meeting minutes from April 20, 2024, were approved as presented.

RECOGNITION OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS – Part 1

Jodi Morton, member of the Adult Recognition Panel, presided over the first part of the recognition ceremony for our outstanding adult volunteers who have demonstrated their commitment to Girl Scouting over many years.

Several volunteers were recognized with special milestone pins, six volunteers received the Sustained Service Pin, and five volunteers were honored with the Nation’s Capital Pin.

TREASURER’S REPORT – Jenny Herrera

In the absence of our Council Treasurer, María Rodríguez, Assistant Council Treasurer, Jenny Herrera, presented the report on the Council’s Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2024 (“Fiscal Year 2024”). A copy of the full report is attached as “Addendum I” to these minutes and incorporated by reference herein.

GIRL SCOUT SPEAKER – Logan Crawford

Following an introduction, Logan Crawford, a 10-year-old fifth grade Girl Scout living in Washington, DC, who was visibly super excited to be at the Annual Meeting, delivered these remarks:

When I think about Girl Scouts, the first thing I think about is the FUN I have with my troop. My Girl Scout troop and I do all kinds of cool things together! We make crafts, volunteer together, and go on field trips, but my favorite thing is to go camping! My troop and I went camping at Harper’s Ferry. We made breakfast over a fire, went white water rafting, and had an outdoor slumber party! It was great! By the time we went home...we were more than friends, we were sisters!

Aside from all of the fun that comes along with being a Girl Scout, for me, being a Girl Scout is also about LEADERSHIP!

Take last Friday as an example! I volunteered to represent my troop when local Girl Scouts were invited to participate in the Situation Room Experience at George Washington’s Mount Vernon. OMG! It was so cool!

There was this United States history simulator game that allowed us to pretend we were back in the 1700’s! Back when America was, like...a baby country!

The Girl Scouts and I were assigned roles as members of Congress, and I was Senator Cabot of Massachusetts! We had to work together to solve problems, just like real leaders do. We had to debate, make decisions, and think on our feet.

We had to solve a big problem, like, a super important problem, just like grown-up leaders do! At first, I was a little nervous. But then, I remembered all the things I practice in Girl Scouts. I remembered that I needed to listen to everyone's ideas, speak clearly, and work as part of a team. And you know what? We did it! We totally saved the country! It was like, superhero level awesome! And...it proved that girls CAN run the nation!

That experience was so amazing! It made me realize that I want to be a leader in our country someday. I want to make a difference, just like the women who came before us. I want to help solve problems and make the world a better place. And I know that Girl Scouts is helping me get there.

Because being a Girl Scout is about learning to be strong, confident, and caring. It's about building friendships that last a lifetime. It's about knowing that you can do anything you set your mind to.

And most importantly, it's about knowing that you're never alone. Because you have a sister in every Girl Scout. Thank you!

FORUM PRESENTATION – Antoinette Barksdale

Second Vice President Antoinette Barksdale and Teen Board Member Annabelle Bragdon reported on the results of the Forums held in February 2025. Antoinette reported that we hosted four in-person and four virtual Forums, including one Teen Forum, and over 200 service unit delegates participated.

Discussion at the Forums centered on a program pillar of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience: Life Skills. We sought to understand how our members define life skills, which life skills they wanted to prioritize, and how program experiences should be delivered. While the definitions of life skills varied, several delegates captured the overall theme with the phrase “Adulting 101.”

Our Girl Scouts need support in becoming confident, self-sufficient, and self-reliant individuals. They need skills that support them professionally, personally, emotionally, and physically. Life skills are those that you don’t learn in school but are essential tools that help you thrive. One of the most popular topics discussed was life after high school, where Girl Scouts seek support as they apply for college and explore careers. Other discussions included building skills and habits that support positive mental wellness and the need to develop skills to support the inclusion of all people.

It was noted that while GSUSA offers life skills badges for every level of Girl Scouting, from citizenship to cooking, art, and financial literacy, according to the feedback, there need to be more hands-on, in-person workshops and field trips beyond troop meetings for our youth to experience and practice as they earn the different badges. The Council is committed to creating and curating these experiences:

- In terms of new or expanded programs, the Council is planning a series of workshops to support our Girl Scouts after high school and to build a more robust mentoring network.
- The Council is planning to develop intensive overnight and one-day workshops to provide hands-on experience in the skilled trades, such as carpentry and plumbing.
- Finally, the Council will continue to offer experiences that develop life-long habits to support mental wellness.

The opportunities are endless, and the Council is committed to offering an extensive portfolio of hands-on experiences for our youth members.

A more detailed report on the Forum discussions is posted on the Council's website.

GIRL SCOUT SPEAKER – Sarah Roelke

Following an introduction, Sarah Roelke, a Girl Scout Ambassador and the co-host of the Council's new podcast, Always a Girl Scout, delivered these remarks:

I was asked to write this speech a few days ago, so naturally, like any Gen Z-er, I asked ChatGPT what it thought. It gave me some interesting ideas, some rather poetic, others with the word "sisterhood" repeated a few too many times to be reliable. But what ChatGPT couldn't grasp is what I'm going to talk about today (rest assured these are my own words).

Growing up, I hopped between all kinds of sports and hobbies, but Girl Scouts gave me something I hadn't found anywhere else: a community where I truly felt like I belonged. When I joined in 5th grade, Girl Scouts offered me an instant sense of connection. Later, my Silver Award connected me with organizations from around the country, and now I see so many familiar faces that I've seen before at service unit events, Council patch programs, and more. I've unlocked a network I never knew I could have.

Girl Scouts is more than just a place to sell cookies or earn badges, although I love doing those things. It's a place where people help you grow and facilitate your dreams. At 11, I was making posters to encourage voting. Today, I'm teaching elementary schoolers about the importance of native plants and environmental conservation for my Gold Award.

But even beyond the projects, for me, it's about the connections I've made through Girl Scouts and the little moments that push me forward. Connections I have with my troop leaders opened new doors for me, showing me it's possible to get a PhD, conduct field business, and even one day run my own freelance business. It's the small moments that remind me what an impact we have on each other.

With Always a Girl Scout, my co-host Ella and I have had the chance to meet and connect with incredible women, from astrobiologists to members of the FBI, many who were Girl Scouts just like us. They've carried values of confidence and leadership in their careers, proving the bonds we build extend past swaps and campfires.

But there's one more thing I want to leave you with. The podcast celebrates another part of that sisterhood: being a sister to people who aren't Girl Scouts yet, from girls, to moms, to women. We're extending a hand and invitation, and we're showing them how powerful this community can be. So when Always a Girl Scout launches later this spring, I hope you'll help us share it. We can grow this network and shape a future where every girl is seen and unstoppable. Thank you!

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION – Mary Brady

Barbara noted that, in accordance with the Council Bylaws regarding nominations from the floor, no nominations from the floor were received in advance of the Annual Meeting. Barbara mentioned that Mary Gay Sprague, Chair of the Nominating Committee, was unable to attend the meeting. Barbara then introduced Mary Brady, a member of the Nominating Committee, and asked her to present the report.

Mary thanked the members of the Committee for their work in putting together the slate of nominees for members-at-large to the Board of Directors, Nominating Committee members, and National and Alternate National Delegates to the National Council Session of GSUSA. Mary noted that the slate of nominees was developed in a manner consistent with our democratic principles and those of Girl Scouts of the USA.

Mary presented the following slate of nominees in the categories set forth below:

For Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors, three-year term, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2028:

Vicky Bailey	Stephanie O'Keefe
Joanne Berdine	Brigitta Toruño
Tracey DeCock	Tiffany Waddell
Divina Gamble	

For Member-at-Large of the Board of Directors, unexpired two-year term, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2027:

Farah Eck

For Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors, one-year term, Teen Girl Scouts, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026:

Zara Jackson
Ava Jones

Motion: The slate of nominees for the Board of Directors was elected as presented by acclamation.

For Members of the Nominating Committee, three-year term, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2028:

Paul Donato
Alex Orfinger
Erica Thomas

Motion: The slate of nominees for members of the Nominating Committee was elected as presented by acclamation.

For National Delegates to the National Council Session of GSUSA, three-year term, to begin immediately upon election:

Michele Ballard	Gabrielle Lewis (teen)	Sharon Richardson
Sayna Bhalla (teen)	Danielle Myers	Beth Saiff
Adrienne Cook	Karen Molloy	Jodi Stiles
Laura Essex	Rhoda Morris	Megan Taylor (teen)
Kim R. Ford (CEO)	Carla Partlow	Johnie Thomas (teen)
Cindy Gilman	Avani Patel (teen)	Jennifer Villalobos
Zuri Gorham (teen)	Chaylen Patty (teen)	Aisha Youins
Nikita Hvozda (teen)	Cathy Plouzek	
Kate Kemmerer	Idalia Ramos	

For Alternate National Delegates to the National Council Session of GSUSA, three-year term, to begin immediately upon election:

Harlow Allen-Dupree (teen)	Ouida Garvin	Aiden Horne (teen)
Colleen Cibula (COO)	Farah Gittens (teen)	Annalina Pickens (teen)
Shreya Gamji (teen)	Angelina Gray	Alexandra Ridgway (teen)

Motion: The slate of nominees for National Delegates, including the incoming team of Officers of the Council who will be duly elected at the Annual Meeting in 2026, and Alternate National Delegates to the National Council of GSUSA was elected as presented by acclamation.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING MEMBERS

Barbara thanked the following individuals, whose terms will expire at the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2025, for their service on the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee:

From the Board of Directors, Members-at-Large

Annabelle Bragdon Paul Donato
Treasure Cephias Natalie Ludaway

From the Nominating Committee

Mary Brady
Karen Penny
Mary Gay Sprague

Barbara also thanked the outgoing National and Alternate National Delegates whose term ended after the Annual Meeting. She expressed gratitude for their participation in the 2023 and 2024 National Council Sessions.

INSTALLATION OF NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Barbara conducted the installation of the newly elected Members-at-large to the Board of Directors, Nominating Committee members, and National and Alternate National Delegates to the National Council of GSUSA. Current Board and Nominating Committee members were asked to join in the installation to reaffirm their commitment by reciting the pledge. Barbara thanked the newly elected members for their willingness to serve.

RECOGNITION OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS – Part 2

Kathy Duda, Chair of Adult Recognition Panel, presided over the second portion of the recognition ceremony for our outstanding adult volunteers. Several volunteers were recognized for 60-plus years as Girl Scout members, seven were recognized with the Thanks Badge, and four were recognized with the Thanks Badge II. One volunteer, Jennifer Manguera, received the Council’s highest honor, the Knox Award.

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS – Barbara Krumsiek

Barbara began her remarks by reflecting on the achievements of the past year. She thanked board members, volunteers, and our generous donors for their commitment to helping us support young leaders who are making a difference. Barbara ended her remarks by noting how proud we are that our Council will be the host of the 2026 National Council Session, July 20-25, 2026, at which we will welcome Girl Scouts from across the country to the Nation’s Capital to celebrate the movement.

The full remarks of the President are attached to these minutes as “Addendum II” and incorporated by reference herein.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REMARKS – Kim R. Ford

Kim began her remarks by reflecting on her first year as CEO. She shared that during the year she visited all 25 counties in WV, MD, and VA in which the Council has members, as well as making visits throughout DC, getting to know and interacting with Girl Scout members of our Council. She ended her remarks by noting that it is an incredible honor to be serving the Council.

The full remarks of the Chief Executive Officer are attached to these minutes as “Addendum III” and incorporated by reference herein.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

Barbara thanked everyone for participating in the Annual Meeting and announced that the next Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2026.

There being no further business, the 63rd Annual Meeting of Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital was adjourned at 11:44 AM.

Wendy White
Secretary of the Board

TREASURER'S REPORT

Jenny Herrera

Good morning, Girl Scouts!

I am so happy to be here to report on our Council's financial condition. The main focus of this report is on the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2024, specifically, the Council's Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities.

The Council's financial statements, which are audited annually, were posted for your review before this meeting and are available on the Council's website. We are pleased to report that our external accounting firm, Aprio LLP, has stated that our financial statements reasonably present our financial position and changes in net assets in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

In 2024, the Council saw strong Cookie Program results, exceeding expectations and highlighting our Girl Scouts' resilience. While some revenue areas fell slightly below budget, we remain focused on strategic growth and sustainability to strengthen our programs and mission.

The Council also successfully operated three sleep-away camps – at Camp Winona, Camp May Flather, and Camp Potomac Woods – providing enriching outdoor experiences for our Girl Scouts.

Ok, now for the details. Feel free to follow along by scanning the QR code on the back of your program to explore, and click on “Treasurer's Report-FY2024,” or look at the big screen behind me.

I'm going to start with the **Council's Assets**.

At the end of our fiscal year, our total assets were **\$69.2 million**. The Council's assets are divided into three categories:

- **Current Assets**: our cash, accounts receivable, shop inventory, and prepaid expenses;
- **Investments**: our Board-Designated operating reserve, operating investments, and endowments; and
- **Property & Equipment**: all our Fixed Assets and Right-of-Use Assets.

The percentage of each category is shown on the first pie chart.

If you swipe on your phone, you'll see the second pie chart we have up on screen, which shows the **Council's Liabilities**, also in two categories. Total liabilities at the end of fiscal year 2024 were **\$12.4 million**.

- **CURRENT LIABILITIES** – our debts or obligations that are due within one year, like accounts payable and accrued payroll liability; and
- **LONG-TERM LIABILITIES** – debts or obligations due in future years beyond one year, which include our lease liabilities.

After accounting for our liabilities, our total net assets amount to **\$56.8 million**, a reflection of our Council's financial health and sustainability. These net assets are categorized as follows:

- **Unrestricted net assets** total **\$50.8 million**, providing essential flexibility to support our programs and operational needs. Of this amount, **\$17.1 million** is board-designated for the **operating reserve**, ensuring financial stability. Additionally, **\$12.5 million** is designated for the **Outdoor Legacy Fund**, reinforcing our commitment to long-term outdoor program initiatives. These allocations reflect our strategic financial planning to sustain and enhance our mission.
- **Temporarily restricted net assets** amount to **\$875,907**, designated for specific initiatives as directed by donors and funding agreements.
- **Permanently restricted net assets** stand at **\$2.35 million**, ensuring long-term financial stability through endowments and other funds that must be maintained.

Finally, we experienced a positive change in net assets of \$2.78 million, demonstrating continued growth and effective financial management.

Let's move to the Council's Revenue.

Swipe on your phone one more time and you'll see revenue without donor restrictions. This includes revenue from Girl Scout product programs, camping, donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

The Council had Net Sales of more than **\$15.1 million**, which include Fall Product, the Cookie Program, and the Girl Scout Shops. This year, we maintained the strong growth achieved last year, reflecting our continued stability and resilience.

We also earned revenue from the three sleep-away camps I mentioned earlier, and other programming.

In total, our revenue was **\$23.3 million**, which is **down 4%** from the previous year.

The next pie chart shows the Council's expenses for the fiscal year 2024.

Program services are the costs associated with providing direct programs and services to youth and adults, which totaled **\$16.1 million**. This amount represents an 11 percent increase over the previous year.

The other expenses on the chart are for Council management, general administrative services, and fundraising. These expenses totaled **\$4.7 million**. This amount represents a 20 percent increase over the previous year.

When you compare how money is spent on programs versus support services, about **77%** of Council expenses goes **directly** to program services – to serve youth and support their leaders. We are grateful for how hard the Council staff works to ensure that year after year, we exceed the industry benchmark of 70% for direct service expenditures.

This concludes the report looking **back** at our financial performance in fiscal year 2024.

If you have specific questions about the financial statements, please get in touch with our Chief Financial Officer, Jessica McClain. She loves talking Girl Scout numbers!

Before I exit the stage though, let me give you a peek at fiscal year 2025.

Our Girl Scout community, including all of you, sold over **4.2 million** boxes of cookies! We so appreciate our partnership with Little Brownie Baker, who worked diligently after completing last year's cookie season to ensure our Girl Scouts had all the cookies they needed for this season. Thank you to our dedicated volunteers who helped make this year's Cookie Program a success!

Coming soon, you will hear about the new cookie that will debut next cookie season. Stay tuned!

This success is your success, and it's what makes Girl Scout programming possible across our region. Congratulations on a fabulous year, Girl Scouts Nation's Capital!

This concludes the Treasurer's report, which will be filed as presented.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Barbara Krumsiek

This past year we achieved so much together. We are simply in awe of the boundless potential we see in every Girl Scout in our Council.

To our board, past and present: thank you for believing in our mission and offering your time and talents in building Girl Scouts of courage, confidence, and character. To our volunteers: thank you for the energy, passion, and guidance you share with our Girl Scout community.

To our generous donors: thank you for investing in our Council to ensure we can deliver the strongest possible experience for our members.

Because of your commitment, we can continue to support young leaders who are making a difference. Together, we're providing the tools and resources our youth need to build the future *they* want to see.

And let me tell you, there's nobody who better exemplifies being a "sister to every Girl Scout" than all of our youth members. Thank you, Girl Scouts.

Our support of these world-changing Girl Scouts would not be possible without you all. Your leadership, volunteerism, and generosity ensure that youth across our region have access to empowering experiences that help them grow into confident, capable, and compassionate leaders.

In the past year, generous donors just like you have stepped up to demonstrate just what it means to be a sister to every Girl Scout. Your inspiring gifts—which come in all forms and sizes—make a real difference. From allowing us to offer memberships, camperships, program grants and more to ensure Girl Scouting remains accessible to ALL ... to revitalizing our eight camps across the region to preserve access to meaningful outdoor experiences for generations to come ... to even promoting the Gold Award through a "Going for Gold" spot during the Olympics ... these are just some of the bold initiatives funded by our generous supporters. And even as we reflect on these milestones, we still have so much to look forward to.

We hope you will join us in for the 6th annual Golf Classic on Monday, September 15, in Fairfax, Virginia, where players will come together to champion the cause of empowering Girl Scouts.

Next, we're gearing up for the 21st Anniversary of Women of Distinction on Wednesday, October 8. This longstanding event will benefit Girl Scouting in the West Virginia region. A heartfelt thank you to Berniece Collis for her dedicated leadership as the committee chair.

And last, but certainly not least, we are proud that Girl Scouts Nation's Capital will be the host of the **2026 Girl Scouts National Convention**. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime event running from July 20 to July 25, 2026, where we will welcome Girl Scouts from across the country to celebrate the Girl Scout Movement. We can't wait to see you there!

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REMARKS
KIM R. FORD

Good morning and thank you again for joining us at our **2025 Annual Meeting**.

I know it was asked at the top of the meeting, but you know I have to ask again --- Are there any Girl Scouts in the House?!?! Sounds like there may be a few with us today!

Last year, I was here as the newly named CEO. I am so grateful to have recently celebrated one year with Girl Scouts Nation's Capital on April 1.

- Happy Anniversary to MEEEEEE

Back then, I was meeting many of you for the first time, and over the course of the past year, I have been to all 25 counties in WV, MD, VA, and throughout DC, and as I look across the audience, it gives me such joy to be able to say that I've had the great privilege of getting to know so many of you --- like I really have!

And after one year, I can confidently say ...

- We aren't just the LARGEST Girl Scout Council in the country ...
- We are also the BEST Girl Scout Council in the country!
 - Mr. Peacock and Mr. Sanders, you can go run ' tell that to GSUSA!!
- We are among the most diverse councils!
- And we are the largest youth-serving nonprofit in our entire region!

Which means that I can tell you: We're also the STRONGEST Girl Scout Council!

As Barbara spoke about earlier, the past few months have not been easy. So many of us are navigating loss. People across our region have lost their employment or are unsure of their futures. Fears about being able to safely gather in public have caused some of our Girl Scout troops to step away. And many people feel as if their identities and their histories are being erased.

In spite of these challenges, we've remained strong. Why? Because of the Sisterhood of Girl Scouting.

Time and time again—as you heard throughout the morning—Girl Scouts have stepped up to support one another. And as we see this spirit of Sisterhood in so many of you, we are inspired to do our best every day to rise to the call.

So we've been busy. Busy defining what sisterhood means to us, and then taking action.

As national dues for membership rise, we're committed to ensuring that EVERYONE who wants to be a Girl Scout and everyone who wants to remain a Girl Scout can do so. And that every Girl Scout can participate in anything and everything we have to offer.

- As our local economy suffers and the cost of living seems to rise every day, we're investing more than ever and are proud to launch our Girl Scout PROMISE FUND – because that's what we do, because our PROMISE states that we will what? Help people at all times!
- What does help look like? Financially --- we will offer DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIP to anyone who wants or needs it. We as a Council will be stepping up to cover significant portions of these national fees...because that's what sisterhood means.
- We will provide FULL support for the Girl Scout experience to anyone who wants to participate, through membership, camperships, uniforms, program grants, and so much more.
- This fund provides a dignified and respectful experience, honoring the talents, strengths, and aspirations of all who seek to share in Girl Scouting ... because that's what sisterhood means and that's what our PROMISE is.

Our PROMISE also says that we will live by the Girl Scout law, which tells us our very theme of today --- to be a SISTER to every Girl Scout

So alongside the PROMISE Fund, we are kicking off our Sister to Every Girl Scout Initiative. This comprehensive, all-encompassing program will provide:

- Resources such as:
 - Legal support, access to immigration services, and safe spaces for youth, etc.
 - Mental wellness supports and using our assets like camps for outdoor convening spaces
 - Databases of services to support job training and placement, babysitting, and other services
- We're looking into additional supports such as
 - Creating a Girl Scout membership card that gets you discounts at area businesses
 - And specific post-secondary offerings like test prep, essay writing and the like
- Also through Connections and convenings
 - Like yoga and meditation outings
 - And days where families can come together and simply have fun with activities, food, and music

- And as we do across the Council, we will do for our team, our AMAZING team --- can we get a spotlight on them ...
 - With you, the folks who are in the trenches and make everything work, we invest in you
 - From the small things like more snacks in the office, to establishing sensory areas, to starting monthly walks, Zumba, and dare I say dance parties

We know that NOW is the time to INVEST, now is the time to DOUBLE DOWN on our commitment to every Girl Scout. We are going to stand alongside you today and tomorrow – no matter what it brings!

This is what makes Girl Scouts the BEST! This is why it isn't soccer or gymnastics or debate or student government, it's a Sisterhood, a LIFELONG bond between family, and family steps UP when times get tough, family is there for you when you don't have anywhere else to turn, your SISTERS are here for you, all of you --- our youth, our adults, our team, our Board.

It is in exactly these kinds of moments where your sister pops up and says, I got you!

- Hey Nation's Cap.....we got you!!

At Girl Scouts Nation's Capital, we have a mission to build youth of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. This is more important now than ever. When I was growing up, parents told their kids that they can be anything they wanted to be.

Parents encouraged us and invested in us. They wanted us to be successful. Today, parents still want the best for their kids. But what I hear more than anything else is that parents want their kids to grow up to be good people.

They want them to fulfill another aspect of our law – to **make the world a better place**

And we want to create more opportunities for you to tell us how you're making the world a better place and to create space for you to ask us for what you need in order to do so:

- Therefore, we're launching a slate of new opportunities for Girl Scouts and our amazing volunteers:
 - We will sponsor a Conference on Youth, Women, and Girls
 - Start a Co-CEO for a Day opportunity for Girl Scouts to shadow either me (boring) or one of the many CEOs in our network
 - Host teas and brunches with Troops and Girl Scout leaders to genuinely connect and be in space with one another

- And we will continue having our town halls across the Council, our Always a Girl Scout podcast is launching next month, and the Council APP is in final testing and that's coming too!

This week someone wrote to me that they watched the annual meeting from last year and said, "Everything you mentioned towards the end of your speech, you have done or started."

I love that, (1) because it's true and (2) because I want you to continue to hold me accountable. What I said last year is in motion:

- Our work in focused communities is up and running with new Troops being formed and us listening and learning from those communities and importantly making changes to our model that fits their needs.
- Salute to Service is up and running with celebrations this month for Month of the Military Child and next month will be Military appreciation month – and love to our uniformed services and foreign service families who are included and represented on our recently established board.
- We are coming together as a Council, I see it every day as I'm out and about and seeing how people are coming together and learning from one another.
 - Systems like the APP will facilitate communication from WV to Southern MD and everywhere in between.
 - We've launched a mapping project in response to your townhall feedback about wanting more programming in your communities, and next month we should have a clearer picture of where we'll start offering more programming and opportunities.
 - And also from your feedback, we're working on more programming for older Girl Scouts to keep them engaged and excited.

And you know our signature effort:

- Once a Girl Scout.....
- We're actively going after the 1M Girl Scouts in our footprint, and we are going to have them saddled up and ready to go for the greatest Convention that this Movement has ever seen next year in July
 - Are we going to show up and show out?!
 - They have NO idea what they did putting it in our region and letting us host it
 - No idea, whatsoever!!!
- And we're getting a street named after us!! Yes, Girl Scouts Way is coming to our HQ in Washington, DC

I remember last year I ended by telling you how my daughter would point to things and say "you see it?!" as I encouraged you to see the vision of where we're going.

- Now she says things like, “Mommy, you burped, say EXCUSE ME, uhhh, manners!”
- But I still get so much joy from seeing the world through her eyes, because she sees opportunity, and hope, and possibility, and excitement, even when it’s in daffodils, bubbles, and dogs’ tails --- and I think that’s the way we should look at the world, because it’s through that lens, that Girl Scouts will continue to make the world a better place.
- Let’s see the opportunity, the hope, the future, and let’s embrace the excitement in things big and small, so we can stand alongside these Girl Scouts, our volunteers, our Once and Always reactivators, our team and Board, and our world, because that’s what it’s going to take.
- So I ask you again --- YOU SEE IT?!?!

Thanks so much, it’s my incredible honor.