

**Preparing for the Next 100 Years of Girl Scouts!  
Remarks for “In Your Honor” Celebration  
May 6, 2012**

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Congratulations to all of the Girl Scout Gold and Silver Award winners we honor today! You represent the pinnacle of excellence in Girl Scouting. This year, we celebrate the amazing first century of Girl Scouts with many ceremonies and tributes, and of course, the most important event, “Rock the Mall” in June. We will sing together and show the world that, yes, even in this day and age --- and because of the many challenges of this day and age --- the public affirmation of “girl power” and the values of the Girl Scouts are relevant, enduring and urgent.

As a college president, it's my job to think about the future all of the time, to push our thinking beyond preoccupation with today's needs to a more astute understanding of what our students must learn to lead the rising generations. The question we must ask today is simply this: glorious as the last 100 years have been for the Girl Scouts, what will Girl Scouts achieve in the next 100 years?

About 50 years ago, when I was a brownie selling cookies in Narberth, Pennsylvania, the world was a smaller and more segregated place for many people. Women and African Americans were still excluded from many schools, colleges and universities, and career opportunities were still very limited.

I grew up in a large family with five brothers, and I can remember the day that the astronaut John Glenn was launched into outer space for the first earth orbit in February 1962. My mom was in the kitchen giving me a Toni Home Perm, trying to make my very straight hair curly, and I can still feel the smelly chemicals running down into my eyes and making me miserable. I could hear the television in the living room where my brothers were crowded around eagerly tracking the rocket launch. I secretly dreamed of being an astronaut, but I knew better than to say that out loud when mom was brandishing those curlers and perm solution. The boys were encouraged to think about flying; I was told to sit still so that the permanent would make me, somehow, cute, which even then I knew was not quite possible.

Well, the curls didn't last very long, and neither did the artificial limitations on the potential achievements for girls and women. I grew up into a world that was rapidly becoming more integrated and more equal, where the rights of women and people of color became an urgent national agenda, where the idea of shattering glass and marble ceilings became a normal goal for an ambitious girl rather than a fringe activity for loud and aberrant women.

The achievements of Girl Scouts in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century helped to make this wonderful new world of opportunity for women possible. Girl Scouts helped to change the horizons for all girls and women in this nation and around the world: 80% of women business owners, 69% of the

women in Congress, every female Secretary of State, more than 50 million women today --- all Girl Scouts demonstrating that “girl power” really can change the world for the better.

Some Girl Scouts did achieve the secret dreams of girls who were told to sit still while the boys learned to fly. Girl Scout Sally Ride was the first woman astronaut, and Kathryn D. Sullivan was among the original women astronauts at NASA, the first woman to walk in space. Other Girl Scouts made history in other ways: Sandra Day O’Connor was the first woman on the Supreme Court; Katie Couric was the first woman to anchor the CBS evening news; Madeleine Albright was the first woman Secretary of State. The list goes on and on.

But the past is simply the prologue to the future you will create for the girls who come after you: who among you, the gold and silver Girl Scouts in this room, will make history to inspire the world for generations to come? Who among you will be founders of new businesses, members of Congress, cabinet secretaries, maybe the first woman to walk on Mars or the first woman president of the United States? If we believe we can walk on Mars, we must believe we can move into the Oval Office!

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Girl Scouts is a time to look back with pride, but more importantly, to look forward with ambition and conviction. What are the values that you must take with you into that future in order to make a real difference in your schools and communities, places of work and corporations, legislatures and executive agencies, in both private and public arenas? Let me address just three today:

First, the value of your creative spirit for the intelligent development of real solutions to thorny problems: that’s precisely what you have had to do to earn your Gold and silver awards. Your creativity can only flourish through the value of hard work --- the hard work of learning as much as you can about the problems you must solve, and acquiring the skills necessary to create the details of the solutions. That’s what a great college education will teach you to do, to bring your creative genius to bear more urgently on the analysis of problems and development of solutions for the great issues of every age.

Girl Scouts in the decades to come can and must use their creative genius to forge solutions to improve our economy, build stronger and more durable businesses that can employ more people, improve the quality and consistency of public education, and find real solutions for the long-term healthcare needs and costs of a society whose lifespan is growing rapidly while its resources are growing thinner. Think of this: at a conference the other day I heard someone say that the baby is already born who will live to 150 years. What does that tell us about the kind of creative economic and social thinking we need in the future, your future?

Second, the value of strong and trusting relationships: friends for life --- isn’t that the best part of Girl Scouts? Over the years, your web of friends grows and joins something that we women in business fondly call “the old girls’ network” through which we help and encourage each other in so many ways --- for business, for families, for personal and professional growth.

We hear a lot these days about the problem of alienation among young people, social isolation, a pervasive sense of disconnection from the needs of the community. A Girl Scout is never

alone, wherever she is in the world, her sister scouts are all around her. And we need Girl Scouts to lift up the community values you represent to call this society back to a shared sense of responsibility for our collective future. We need Girl Scouts of all ages, in all positions of leadership and influence, to say to our families and communities and fellow citizens: let's stop the bitterly divisive rhetoric, the ugly morass of accusation and suspicion that has infected too many places in our society --- especially places where we need effective decision-making for the good of everyone.

Third, the value of a strong ethical commitment to honesty and service to the community: if you take nothing else from your Girl Scout days it must be this: you must never cut corners on honesty and integrity, you must make the idea of ethical living a central part of your life each day. And one of the best ways to exercise the muscle of ethics is to be of service to others in need, because as you share your time and talent with others, you will realize two things: the utter waste of selfish preoccupations which are the root of most dishonesty; and the complete joy that comes from sharing the best of yourself with others who grow through your work, which is more reward than you might ever have desired. We need Girl Scouts to remind all of us of the social imperative of ethical living, the joy of service, and the hope that the selfless act of kindness can rekindle in other souls.

Because Trinity shares so much in common with the mission of the Girl Scouts in the development of strong, courageous, confident women, ten years ago Trinity created the Girl Scout Scholars program here to encourage Girl Scouts to take full advantage of a college education that focuses on women's leadership in our society.

Since 2002, 90 Girl Scouts have received more than \$1.8 million in Trinity scholarships, including \$724,000 in the Girl Scouts Scholars program and an additional \$1.2 million in other Trinity grants. Additionally, these students have received other forms of financial assistance for college amounting to a total of more than \$3 million in Trinity scholarships, federal grants and loans. We have 41 Girl Scout Scholars currently enrolled at Trinity, and they are among our best students and top campus leaders.

Trinity will continue this robust Girl Scout Scholars program in which we award scholarships, renewable every year for the student's enrollment at Trinity, in the amount of \$5,000 annually for Gold Award girls, \$4,000 annually for Silver Awards, and \$3,000 annually for all other Girl Scouts.

Even as Trinity continues the general Girl Scout Scholars program, this year, in honor of the Girl Scouts Centennial, I am pleased to announce that, this year, Trinity will now create Girl Scout Centennial Awards for the highest achieving Girl Scouts. For high achieving Gold and Silver Award Girl Scouts who meet certain criteria, Trinity will double the value of the Girl Scout Scholarships to \$10,000 annually for Gold Award girls, and \$8,000 for Silver Award girls. The criteria for these Centennial Girl Scout Scholarships are: entering Trinity in Fall 2012 or thereafter; presenting a high school grade point average of 3.5 and maintaining a 3.5 grade point average throughout college; outstanding service to this community and the community at-large; and clear evidence of leadership among Trinity students in the advancement of our principles of honor and integrity.

Trinity is pleased to advance our partnership with the Girl Scouts, the girls and families in this way because we believe that by making girls strong and advancing their education, we really can make the world a much better place for our children and families far into the future.

Congratulations to all of our Girl Scouts awardees today!