

The Lowdown

Alum Newsletter // Spring-Summer 2023



Meet Our Board of Directors

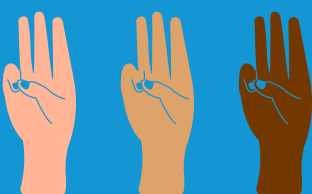
Governance structures are part of every Girl Scouts council and are defined by council bylaws. Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways' governing body is its Board of Directors.

Under the leadership of our chair, Tiffany Alvarez Smith, our 18 board members maintain the integrity and purpose of Girl Scouting within our council jurisdiction spanning 24 counties in New York and two in northern Pennsylvania.

Our board's responsibilities include influencing policy regarding council goals and issues affecting girls and the business of our organization, as well as strategic planning, financial oversight, and fund development.

We're dedicating this issue of The Lowdown to the time, talent, and treasure of our Board of Directors. Inside, we invite you to learn a bit more about the incredible individuals who compose our slate of officers and our members-at-large.

If you or someone you know have an interest in sharing your talent with us as a member of our board, we encourage you to complete our interest form today. It can be found at gsnypenn.org/board or reach out to boardofdirectors@gsnypenn.org.



LOOK INSIDE!

- Board of Directors Spotlights
- History and Archives Corner
- Col. Eileen Collins Event Recap

Dear Friends of Girl Scouting,

I hope this reaches everyone in good health, enjoying a beautiful spring as we head into summer, and that I might see you at a council event or alum activity over the next few months. Susan Swanson has graciously agreed to head alum activities with me, and I'm thrilled for her support! Here's a little bit about what we've been up to these last few months...



Syracuse Move: We relocated to 960 James St. and are settled in. If you'd like to see our new space, reach out. The move allows us to use resources wisely by saving \$50K a year in annual operations/maintenance in addition to the costs of capital projects we would have incurred had we stayed in Cicero. We're geographically closer to other nonprofits in Greater Syracuse and have created access for folks who could not easily reach us. We have a great space for our staff and members and a store. (We still maintain a store and office in Horseheads, and offices in Maine, Utica, and Seneca Falls.)

Membership: We're up five percent thanks to the hard work and dedication of our amazing staff and volunteers!

Through the Glass Ceiling to the Stars with Col. Eileen Collins: We co-hosted this momentous occasion on April 22 in partnership with Onondaga Community College. See inside for details. More than 400 people attended!

Tee It Up for Girl Scouts: We're thrilled about our golf tournament on June 19 at the Cavalry Club in Manlius. (It will have taken place by the time this issue hits mailboxes.) We're hosting a dinner with keynote by National Grid's Melanie Littlejohn on the importance of Juneteenth and have many silent auction items and experiences. It will be a great day in support of our mission!

Summer Camp: All properties are hosting overnight and/or day camps this season—plus specialty, add-on, and off-property adventures. We always need funding for youth to attend camp. No donation is too small!

2023 Women of Distinction Honoring Shanel Boyce: Shanel is a practicing clinical therapist, LPN, and seasoned community organizer, activist, advocate, and consultant specializing in intersectional anti-racism education and advocacy. She's also a proud Girl Scout Mom! The event will be on September 26 in Binghamton. We hope you'll join us! Registration will open at a later date.

I hope you enjoy this issue, dedicated to our Board of Directors!

Yours in Girl Scouting,

JoAnne Morak
Vice President of Advancement & Retail Operations



GSNYPENN Board of Directors 2023-24

Officers:

Tiffany Alvarez Smith, Chair
Kathy Burke Barry, 1st Vice Chair
Katie MacIntyre, 2nd Vice Chair
Susan Duerr, Treasurer
Cindy Demo, Secretary

GSNYPENN Senior Leadership Team

Julie Dale, Chief Executive Officer
Margaret F. Williams, Chief Business Officer
Jaime Alvarez, Vice President of Marketing & Communications
JoAnne Morak, Vice President of Advancement & Retail Operations
Liz Schmidt, Vice President of Property & Programs
Sara Scott, Vice President of Membership Engagement & Data Services
Christina Verratti, Vice President of Membership Support & Product Programs
Angela Smith, Executive Administrator

The Lowdown Staff

Executive Editor: Jaime Alvarez
Editor: JoAnne Morak
Creative Director: Kaitlyn Greer
Design Contributor: Ginger Van Allen
Content Contributors: Rita Chirumbolo Ernstrom & Angela Smith
Printed By: Upstate Printing

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Members-at-Large:

Debbie Calkins
Tiffany Campau
Judi Dixon
Kim Lamar Shelton
Michelle McCabe-Szczepanski
Carl McLaughlin
Karen Roth
Mike Sabo
Deb Sanderson
Paloma Sarkar
Sheri Seguin
Judy Suddaby
Vanessa Teamoh

GSNYPENN Board

Cindy Demo, Secretary Alexandria Bay, N.Y.

Joined: May 2014
Retired Educator—30 years as ESL/GED Teacher, NYS Department of Corrections & Community Services; 40 years as Instructor of English, Jefferson Community College

Cindy previously served for 10 years on the Thousand Islands Legacy Council Board. She serves our board as Secretary, Advancement Committee Chair, and on the Annual Meeting Committee.

Cindy joined our board due to the positive experience she had with Thousand Islands. Along with her personal and professional efforts of our staff, and her ability to promote the Scout mission, she feels she has been part of change that will further enhance and grow our council.

Cindy has been involved in Girl Scouting for almost 40 years. Starting as a Brownie in her mother's troop, she moved through the ranks and earned the Gold Award as a Senior. After moving to Watertown from Western New York, she became a Cadette/Senior troop leader and took on many roles: Neighborhood Chair, Delegate, Cookie Chair, and advised several young ladies pursuing Gold Awards.

One of Cindy's favorite memories as a Brownie/Juniata was riding the bus to day camp. She learned many songs and was later able to lead and play guitar for campers at overnight camp when she was a Cadette/Senior. For Cindy, there's nothing like a crackling campfire with good songs, "rounds" and s'mores. Her favorite memory as a troop leader is taking six wide-eyed Cadettes to New York City for the first time to see "Cats," experience the subway, visit the Statue of Liberty, and ride to the top of the World Trade Center. Traveling to the city became an annual event for her troop and created lasting memories still talked about today.

Karen Roth, Member-At-Large Stittville, N.Y.

Joined: May 2022
Chief Engineer, Air Force Research Laboratory

Susan Duerr, Treasurer North Syracuse, N.Y.

Joined: May 2009
Retired Accountant - Past Director of Finance, MedBest Medical Management

Susan has been on our board since the merger. She previously served on the Central New York Legacy Council Board and was honored to be asked to join GSNYPENN. She serves our council Treasurer and has also served as Board Development Chair and Finance Chair.

After her days as a Girl Scout troop leader were over, she wished to continue being associated with the Movement. She helps girls understand who they are and what they are. She is honored to do so as a board member.

Her fondest Girl Scout memory is when her daughter and daughter-in-law started their own troop. All three of her granddaughters are current GSNYPENN members and are always invited to camp with them.

Carl McLaughlin, Member-At-Large Watertown, N.Y.

Joined: May 2018
Retired, Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization

Tiffany Campau, Member-At-Large Syracuse, N.Y.

Joined: May 2021
Coach Impact Lead, The Achievement Network

Board Member Spotlights



Tiffany joined our board because she wanted the opportunity to elevate the voices of the most marginalized children in Syracuse so that they may have a chance to join Girl Scouting. She feels that our Movement helps youth find opportunities for leadership, friendship, and giving back to their communities.

Her favorite memory as a Girl Scout was a “lock-in” at the local mall with her mom and Brownie troop. The girls learned about the ways in which businesses operate, took part in some nighttime shopping, and made many lasting memories.

**Deb Sanderson, Member-At-Large
Norwich, N.Y.
Joined: May 2020**
Retired, Chenango County Area Agency on Aging



**Michelle McCabe-Szczepanski, Member-At-Large
Binghamton, N.Y.
Joined: May 2020**
Associate Attorney, Levene Gouldin & Thompson, LLP



Michelle joined our board because she wanted to become re-involved in Girl Scouting. She never had the chance to rejoin our Movement during her girl member days when her family moved back to New York from North Carolina and sees this as her way of “going back in time” to be a Girl Scout once again.

Michelle’s favorite Girl Scout memory is the summer she attended overnight camp as a Brownie in North Carolina. She was terrified at first and called her mom to come pick her up in the middle of the night. She refused, which Michelle says was the best thing she could have done for her! The next morning, she learned how to make pancakes.

**Judi Dixon, Member-At-Large
Memphis, N.Y.
Joined: May 2014**
Self-Employed, Strategic Event Management



**Kim Lamar Shelton, Member-At-Large
Vestal/Corning, N.Y. (resides) & Mansfield, Pa. (works)
Joined: May 2016**
Professor and Director of TRiO Student Support Services Program, Mansfield University of the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania



Kim has served our board since the realignment of legacy councils and has held the roles of Board Officer, Member-At-Large, Committee Chair, and Board Development Committee positions throughout this time.

A Girl Scout alum and former troop co-leader, day camp and bus assistant, and Indian Hills Legacy Council Board Member, her experiences were thoroughly enriching and rewarding. As a result, she seized the opportunity and submitted her intent and application to continue serving girls and volunteers of the newly established GSNYPENN.

Her favorite Girl Scout memory is camping. Growing up on Long Island, she spent part of the summer each year at Camp Edey. The friendships, activities, and leadership lessons she gained there live in her heart and mind to this day. In adulthood, there are truly no words to express the joy of sharing her numerous camping experiences with her daughter, Katherine Angelica, and her troop at our property Camp Amahami.

Kim is humbled, grateful, and strongly believes that camping and her Girl Scout Leadership Experience contributed to her personal growth and empowerment by helping her challenge herself and overcome her fears; learn conflict resolution, teamwork, and communication skills; healthy risk-taking

and confidence building; reinventing oneself and learning from others’ perspectives; and expanding her worldview with exposure to others from diverse backgrounds.

**Debbie Calkins, Member-At-Large
Mansfield, Pa.
Joined: May 2022**
Retired; Former Owner/Operator, Debbie’s Day Care



**Michael Sabo, Member-At-Large
Endicott, N.Y.
Joined: May 2009**
Retired, IBM



Mike has served our council since its inception and is another charter member of the board. As a former member of the Seven Lakes Legacy Council Board, he considered it an honor to be asked to join GSNYPENN in 2009.

His favorite Girl Scout memory is the weekend board retreat held at Edith Macy Center in Westchester County, N.Y. Located in Briarcliff Manor and 45 minutes from Manhattan, Mike enjoyed that Edith Macy is situated among 400-plus wooded acres on a mountainside. The facility is named after Edith Carpenter Macy, chair of the Girl Scout National Board of Directors from 1919-1925 and is steeped in history. The “University in the Woods,” as Macy was called in the early days, continues to serve as the site of numerous Girl Scout workshops and conferences.

**Katie MacIntyre, 2nd Vice Chair
Auburn, N.Y.
Joined: May 2019**
Manager, Marketing Products, National Grid



Katie has served on our board for four years. She has been involved with Girl Scouting in our footprint since 2005 through her work with Seven Lakes Legacy Council.

Her favorite Girl Scout memories are summers spent as a girl member at a Girl Scout camp property located in Thetford, Vermont.

**Judy Suddaby, Member-At-Large
Onondaga, N.Y.
Joined: May 2017**
Attorney, New York State Court of Claims



Judy joined our board to ensure Girl Scouting remains viable for all girls to have fun and develop lifelong leadership skills.

Her favorite Girl Scout memories are our council’s annual Gold Award Girl Scout Celebrations and hearing about the impact of each girl’s amazing Take Action project.

**Vanessa Teamoh, Member-At-Large
Watertown, N.Y.
Joined: May 2023**
Technical Specialist, Jefferson Community College



Vanessa is our newest board member and was added to our slate at the council’s annual meeting in May. She joined because she has wonderful memories from her days as a Girl Scout and wants to help others make those lifelong memories, too.

Her favorite Girl Scout memory is when her troop took a trip to Build-A-Bear Workshop. They each created their own personal bear and earned a special badge for making them.

**Kathy Burke Barry, 1st Vice Chair
Syracuse, N.Y.
Joined: May 2014**
Partner, Dermody, Burke & Brown CPAs LLC



One of Kathy’s clients was a lifelong Girl Scout and passionate about the benefits of what Girl Scouting offers girls. Kathy had never been a Girl Scout and was not familiar with what our Movement involved— other than

“awesome cookies.” Her client educated her about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and recruited her to join our board first as a committee member and later as an at-large member.

The more Kathy learned about our mission and council, the more impressed she grew. She says though our council may be a small organization compared to others, she likes that it offers a vast variety of opportunities to its membership.

Her favorite Girl Scout memories are our cookieWOW! events. She loved that the board had its own booth to meet girls and discuss what a board does. The year the event was held at the NYS Fairgrounds after a terrible snowstorm the night before is one of her favorites due to the number of girls who showed up despite the weather.

Proof, she says, that Girl Scouts have a strong determination.

“To interact with the girls was a wonderful experience. Some were shy while others were very outgoing, but they lit up when they talked about the fun they have being Girl Scouts. By the end of the event, I had no voice left, my hand hurt from receiving so many proper handshakes, and my face muscles were sore from smiling for so long!”

**Paloma Sarkar, Member-At-Large
Oswego, N.Y.**

Joined: May 2022

*First Vice President, Enterprise Risk Manager,
Pathfinder Bank*



Paloma was not part of Girls Scouts growing up in India and moved to the U.S. in 2010. She joined our board because of the impact she feels our Movement has on young women as they grow.

Coming from India, Paloma saw how gender inequality has deterred growth for girls there. Her passion and goal in life is to make an impact in the lives of young girls and hopes that through her association with us, she can do just a little bit of that.

Her favorite Girl Scout memory is greeting young girl members at our council's Annual Meeting and seeing the confidence they possess at such an early age because of their association with Girl Scouting. Getting to meet Col. Eileen Collins, the NASA pioneer and first female astronaut to command a space shuttle mission, was also an amazing experience for her.

**Sheri Seguin, Member-At-Large
Ogdensburg, N.Y.**

Joined: May 2022

*CORE Peer Navigator, North Country & Northern
Central Regions, NY Association of Psychiatric
Rehabilitation Services*



Sheri joined our board to ensure Girl Scouting stays accessible and inclusive. Many girls live in poverty and have difficult life experiences, as she says she did. Living in a rural isolated spot of the state, Sheri wants to be an adult to give girls a voice at the table.

Sheri works within the advocacy, mental health, and education fields. She believes her lived experiences can be positive assets to Girl Scouting.

Her favorite Girl Scout memories are taking part in activities as a Brownie girl member and later as an adult troop leader.

**Tiffany Alvarez Smith, Chair
Liverpool, N.Y.**

Joined: May 2019

*Educator; Managing Director, Partnerships at
Achievement Network*



Tiffany joined our board in 2019 and became chair in 2022. She loves being on the board because it keeps her involved with Girl Scouting. Tiffany is a lifelong Girl Scout and earned her Gold Award as a girl member. (We featured a full-length profile/new chair welcome on Tiffany in our prior Lowdown issue.)

Her favorite Girl Scout memory is when she was 14 years old, and her troop traveled to Yellowstone National Park. They planned the trip for over a year and drove from Vancouver, Washington through Oregon, Idaho, and Montana over a period of 10 days.

History and Archives Corner

It is known that a Board of Directors supports the mission of an organization. What if there is not yet an organization, nor a formalized mission, but only a bold, brash, and brave individual on a mission to bring something new and grand to all girls everywhere?

In 1912 that person was Juliette Gordon Low. Her vision: Girl Scouting. Her sole mission: grow the membership and expand the Girl Scouts into an organization.



Juliette Low's initial “Board of Directors” were her family and friends. Nina Pape, Juliette's cousin, and other girlhood friends were engaged to help spread the word in Savannah, Georgia, about Girl Scouts. Daisy—as Juliette was called—made contact with many people beyond Savannah from Baltimore to New York City to Boston.

In 1913, Daisy moved Girl Scout Headquarters located in the Carriage House at her family's home in Savannah, to a national headquarters space in Washington, D.C. In 1916, headquarters moved to New York City; one room, a file cabinet, and a desk. In 1917, the national headquarters relocated again in NYC, offering 2 rooms, and later expanded adding a Board Room and Girl Scout Shop.

Daisy did not hesitate to reach out and ask for help from others. Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr who established Hull House in Chicago; her own goddaughter Anne Hyde Choate; Corrine Roosevelt Robinson, Theodore Roosevelt's sister; Thomas Edison's wife, Mina, to name a few.

“I could not refuse her!” expressed Anne Hyde Choate. Daisy was a force. She wanted everyone to support Girl Scouting! In no uncertain terms, her stated mission was it must be understood, “the girls must always come first” and “Girl Scouting was to be fun!”

Daisy gave it her all...in time, talent, passion, and finances. It was not until 1917, at the Board's suggestion, that Girl Scouts began their first-ever fundraising campaign so that Juliette Low would not have to continue to bear all the organization's expenses. Anne Hyde Choate and one other Board member formed a committee of two and wrote letters asking for contributions of any amount. Donations came from church members, businesses, and friends.

Juliette Low was visionary in developing a Board of Directors supportive of Girl Scouting by engaging individuals on principles similar to today's definition (by Bloomer) of the “Four C's of Board Recruitment.”

CULTURE: people aligned with the core values of the organization

CHARACTER: caring, respectful, and kind people

COMPETENCE: in an area of expertise

CONNECTION: not only to highly affluent people but to people who bring a passion for the mission...

History teaches that when much seems to have changed, a deeper understanding of past themes and actions taken informs that much remains the same, and for good reason. Bold, brave, talent, passion, vision, culture, character, and “girls first” are themes attributed to the early successes in Girl Scout history.

Actions taken early in Girl Scout history continue to inspire. Juliette Low was not afraid to ask for help. A pen and a committee of two can be enormously powerful. Girl Scout Headquarters were often moved in the early years. Girl Scouting is supposed to be fun!



What a foundation to be embraced by the Girl Scouts Boards of Directors of today as they chart the future of the Girl Scout organization of tomorrow! Thank you, Juliette Low and the GSUSA Board of Directors, 1917!

Written by Rita Chirumbolo Ernstrom, a member of the newly formed GSNYPENN Board of Directors when our fu

Help Support Camp Beyond Binary

Camp Beyond Binary—powered by our council—provides a safe space for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies to explore new challenges, make new friends, and just be themselves in a supportive environment.

The camp's core values are leadership, empathy, justice, transformation, and belonging. The program offers a blend of traditional “camp” activities and community-building like evening activities and community circles.

“My community circle became like a close friend group for me. I could trust them all and we care very much about each other”— Camper survey response

If you would like to learn more about Camp Beyond Binary or donate, contact Liz Schmidt, Vice President of Property & Programs, at lschmidt@gsnypenn.org.



Through the Glass Ceiling to the Stars with Col. Eileen Collins

On April 22, Earth Day and Girl Scout Leader's Day, more than 400 Girl Scout members and the public joined us at Onondaga Community College for an unforgettable experience. The day started with STEM workshops for girls followed by a special talk and presentation in SRC Arena by NASA pioneer Col. Eileen Collins.

Before her lecture time was up, she helped us present GSNYPENN Cadette Charlotte DuBois of Baldwinsville, N.Y., with a special token as one of 81 national winners of Girl Scouts' “To the Moon and Back” essay contest. Girl Scouts shared how they saw their role in space exploration using creative writing skills and NASA research facts. Charlotte was awarded a Space Science Researcher badge that traveled 1.4 million miles aboard NASA's Artemis I mission.

Col. Collins, a Girl Scout alum, has local ties. A native of Elmira, she's a graduate of SUNY Corning Community College and Syracuse University. From her Air Force experience as a flight instructor and test pilot to her incredible achievement of being the first woman to pilot the Space Shuttle and first to command a shuttle mission, Collins was the perfect role model to present this very special badge.



Her lecture ended with a special Girl Scouts-only Q&A that ran past its allotted time as she gave each youth and adult in attendance special, uninterrupted treatment. The day concluded with a fundraising dinner where Collins spoke to yet another attentive audience and spent time talking with guests in lieu of enjoying her meal.

We are so appreciative of Col. Collins' time and kindness during this one-of-a-kind experience for our council and members!



About GSNYPENN

Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways is chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to administer the Girl Scout program in 24 counties of New York and two in Pennsylvania. We're the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. We offer every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success.

We are dedicated to serving our council membership. Your support stays local and gives girls across our region the opportunity to experience the magic of Girl Scouting.

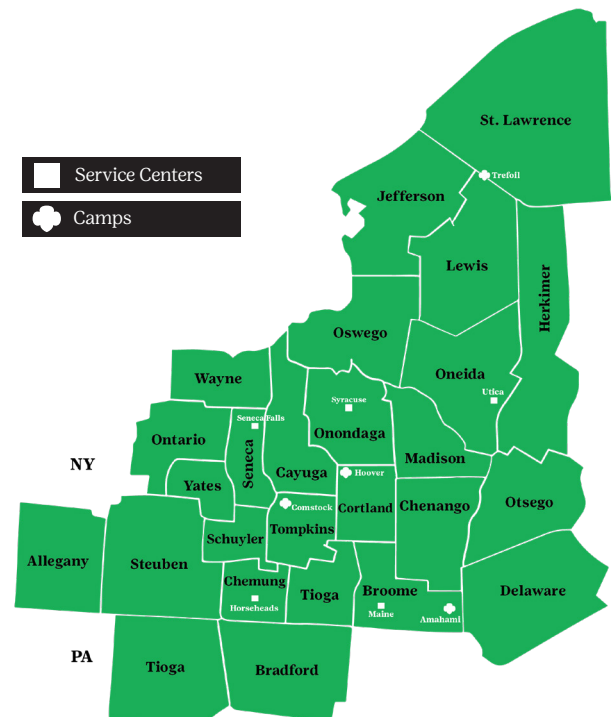
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Building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

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Branded Items

Our council will begin offering in-house design/print services on branded T-shirts and other items in the next months. Keep an eye out here and on our bimonthly NYPENN News of Note e-newsletter! Contact JoAnne to get opted into that e-newsletter: jmorak@gsnypenn.org.



Meet Judy Augustine: Horseheads Store Manager

Judy has worked in retail for Girls Scouts for 17 years, starting as a part-time clerk in Horseheads in 2006. In 2009, when Seven Lakes merged with other legacy councils to become GSNYPENN, she accepted a full-time position.

Her additional responsibilities include managing inventory, ordering merchandise, and overseeing our Horseheads Cookie Cupboard. Judy also sets up travel stores for events and trading posts at our camps.

“When you love what you do, it’s not work, and I love my work with Girl Scouts. I feel very rewarded with the opportunities I’ve been offered. I love working with my customers and co-workers. I have met a lot of amazing volunteers over the years and have formed friendships with many of them,” she says.

Judy and her husband have been married for 40 years. They have two adult daughters, a granddaughter, and a grandson. When her daughters were Girl Scouts, she volunteered and is now active with her granddaughter’s troop. Judy also enjoys gardening, yard work, and walking year-round.

“I do my best every day to live by the Girl Scout Promise and Law.”



Juliette Gordon Low Society

Have you made a planned gift to Girl Scouts to become part of this national society? Please let us know so we can honor you with this beautiful pin! If you haven’t, it’s easy. You can leave any amount or percent of your life insurance or estate to Girl Scouts—a small bequest can make a huge difference for our girls’ future!



Did You Know?

In 2018, GSUSA and Dianne Belk, Founding Chair of the Juliette Gordon Low National Society, raised a challenge for each council across the nation to acquire four planned gifts. In return, each council would receive a planned gift of \$10,000 from Dianne Belk and Lawrence Calder. GSNYPENN accepted and met this challenge!

We hope you’ll consider making a gift and joining the society! Contact JoAnne to discuss your options. Membership ensures you remain connected to GSNYPENN now and in the future.