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GIRL SCOUTS OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA ANNOUNCE 2022 TAKE THE LEAD GREATER PHILADELPHIA HONOREES

Four women leaders who exemplify courage, confidence, and character and make the world a better place will be honored and paired with local Girl Scouts for an amazing event

MIQUON, PA (November 4, 2021) — [Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania](#) (GSEP) has named its 2022 Take the Lead Greater Philadelphia honorees. Four women were selected by a committee of past Take the Lead honorees to be recognized at the annual event on Thursday, March 10, 2022.

Girl Scouts' mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, girls are prepared for a lifetime of leadership, success, and adventure in a safe, no-limits place designed for and by girls.

Through Take the Lead, high school-aged Girl Scouts are paired with inspiring women leaders from Greater Philadelphia and shadow them for a day to gain valuable insight into their careers and receive guidance to jumpstart their professional networks. The girls, who are selected through a competitive application and interview process, creatively write and then deliver their presentation to an audience of 500+ attendees.

The 2022 honorees are servant leaders who help our communities in various ways, and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. These women go above and beyond in their contributions to their personal and professional communities and serve as exemplary role models for girls.

2022 Take the Lead Greater Philadelphia Honorees

- **Julie Alleman, CEO of Children and Adult Disability and Education Services (CADES):** Julie is the pillar of the positive culture at CADES. She has guided an incredible, yet complex, organization through a historic and tumultuous time with her relentless positive energy. She spends every waking moment thinking of ways to improve the lives of the organization and its people, whether it's figuring out COVID operations during a pandemic or just chatting with a direct support professional on their shift to see how they're coping.
- **Chekemma J. Fulmore-Townsend, President and CEO, Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN):** Chekemma has dedicated her career to preparing young people in the City of Philadelphia for productive lives in the workforce. She bridges services across complex systems to unite energy and common goals to motivate young people and assist them through the transition from childhood to adulthood. In Summer 2020, she led her team to quickly pivot the WorkReady program to primarily remote experiences following Mayor Jim Kenney's stay-at-home order.
- **Leslie S. Richards, CEO and General Manager, SEPTA:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, an increasing number of people experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues are seeking refuge on SEPTA's vehicles and in stations. Through her leadership, SEPTA formed an innovative partnership with a social service nonprofit, Merakey, to pair substance abuse and mental health professionals with transit police officers to extend treatment and community-based resources to those in need. Leslie and her team supported the shifting transportation needs of our community, and have never had the opportunity to work from home.
- **Antonia M. Villarruel, PhD, RN, FAAN, Professor and Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing:** Antonia has been working to reduce health disparities in the Hispanic community for over 30 years. She developed Cuídate ("Take Care of Yourself"), a program aimed to promote abstinence and safer sex for Latino teens. She is the only Latina nursing dean at an ivy

league school and the first dean at the University of Pennsylvania to serve who has prior and current NIH funding. She is also co-leading one of 10 new research teams from across the country that received National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants totaling \$14 million to extend the reach of the NIH's Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19 Disparities.

"Our 2022 Take the Lead honorees have changed the world for the better, and we are all indebted to them for their service and leadership through the pandemic. These inspiring women serve as a guiding light for what is possible in the face of adversity, and are tremendous role models for our girls," said Kim E. Fraitess-Dow, Chief Executive Officer of GSEP.

Take the Lead is co-chaired in Greater Philadelphia by Rev. Dr. Lorina Marshall-Blake, President, Independence Blue Cross Foundation, Vice President of Community Affairs, Independence Blue Cross and Tiffany Tavarez, Senior Vice President, Community Sponsorships and Strategy, Wells Fargo Advisors (WFA). Lorina leads strategic, programmatic, and operational efforts to fulfill the Foundation's mission to lead sustainable solutions that improve the health and wellness of the community. She is also involved with more than 30 professional and civic organizations. Tiffany is responsible for building a strategic framework that ensures that Wells Fargo Advisor's non-foundational dollars are allotted in a manner that maximizes community impact, strengthens relationships with WFA clients and external stakeholders, and aligns with the company's national philanthropic goals. Numerous organizations throughout the region have recognized her work and commitment to civic engagement and impact.

"The Take the Lead event raises critical funds for Girl Scouting in Eastern Pennsylvania and is more important this year than ever before. Event co-chairs and committees work tirelessly to help raise money to sustain Girl Scouting in every community, and to ensure that every girl has access to our leadership program so she can develop the skills to become the leaders she wants to be and the leader our world needs her to be," said Fraitess-Dow.

Take the Lead Greater Philadelphia honorees will be celebrated at a special girl-led ceremony on Thursday, March 10, 2022, at the Crystal Tea Room which will be transformed into a camp-like setting. Guests will be invited to engage in activities Girl Scouts experience at camp, like soft archery, hands-on STEM activities, and s'mores making. The evening's menu will feature hors d'oeuvres stations, beer and wine tastings, and Girl Scout cookies...including the new Adventurefuls. Additionally, the paddle raise for campership support will continue again this year helping provide hundreds of Girl Scouts throughout Greater Philadelphia the opportunity to experience all that camp has to offer with the help of financial aid.

For more information about Take the Lead sponsorships, advertising and tickets, visit www.gsep.org/takethelead or call 267-422-2533.

About Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania

Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania (GSEP) is the largest girl-serving organization in Pennsylvania and builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. What was started in 1912 in Savannah, Georgia by founder Juliette Gordon Low as one small, yet dedicated troop of diverse girls has grown into 2.8 million Girl Scouts across the U.S. today. GSEP serves close to 35,000 girls in partnership with more than 15,000 volunteers in Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton and Philadelphia counties. Today, 80 percent of women in leadership and executive roles in the U.S. were Girl Scouts. Girl Scout alum comprise 70 percent of women in the U.S. Congress. For further information about Girl Scouting, how to join, volunteer, reconnect, or donate, call 215-564-2030 or visit www.gsep.org. Follow @GirlScoutsEPenn on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.