



Girl Scout AMOUS FORMERS

*Celebrating the Spirit of
Women's Leadership!*

Girl Scout FAMOUS FORMERS

Opening

Rae Pearson Benn
Mistress of Ceremonies

Social Mingling & Art Activities

Tile Pour
Canvas Creation

Famous Former Recognitions

Closing

Laura Morgan
GSCCC Board Member and
Philanthropy Committee Chairperson



Meet Rae Pearson Benn!

Rae Pearson Benn is a part of the family at WTVZ as the host of Our Issues Hampton Roads and Regent University as its Director of Communications in the Marketing & Public Relations Department. She has also served as a media professional at WAVY TV-10, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, and the Office of Attorney General. She is a former Mrs. Virginia Beach-America 2012 and Mrs. Coastal Virginia-America 2014. While with the City of Virginia Beach,

Rae earned two Emmy nominations as a writer/producer in 2019 and 2020. In addition, Rae was awarded ACHI Magazine's 2016 TV Personality of the Year and ACHI Magazine's 2024 Year's Excellence in Journalism. She's a strong supporter of Girl Scouts and has done multiple interviews showcasing the organization and all they do to help girls build leadership. Her favorite Girl Scout Cookies – Thin Mints!



Tracy Keller
Chief Executive Officer

We thank our 2025 Famous Former Girl Scouts for their outstanding commitment and contributions they have made as leaders in the community. Each of them have used their knowledge, talents, extraordinary skills and voices to make a difference.

This award is more than a celebration of these amazing women. It is a spotlight on Girl Scouts, a unique organization that is dedicated to building girls of courage, confidence and character. Girl Scouts advocates for girls and provides leadership opportunities during girls' formative years. We need to hold up examples of what is to come, and our Famous Former Girl Scouts help us do that. We want our Girl Scouts of today to see women who

show up as full human beings with experiences across sectors and geographies, diverse backgrounds and upbringings — and who have excelled. Thank you for your work.

A study by the Girl Scout Research Institute shows compelling evidence that Girl Scouts stand out significantly from non-Girl Scouts, demonstrating more well-rounded lifestyles, a stronger propensity for success, a stronger interest in civic engagement, and most importantly, in this world reeling with a plague of mental health concerns, an inclination to feel hopeful about their future.

This data is not bound by socioeconomic factors or race. Girl Scouts across all zip codes experience positive life outcomes as a direct result of participation in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This work is critical. More opportunities for girls are needed, and more role models are needed.

We are honored to have so many Girl Scout alum, especially this year's honorees, in our Council who are ready to step up and be those role models and support our Mission. They embody courage, taking on challenges and risks for the greater good. They demonstrate confidence as they accomplish what they set out to do and are assured of their abilities, and they lead with character, purposeful and value-centered.

Be inspired by these honorees and feel energized by the Girl Scout Movement. Find ways that you, too, can foster leadership, be engaged within your community, and support a legacy of empowering girls to make a positive impact on the world!

Tracy Keller
Chief Executive Officer, GSCCC

CONGRATULATIONS

PRESIDENT JAVAUNE ADAMS-GASTON, PH.D.! CHAMPION AND ROLE MODEL

As a former Girl Scout, you exemplify the characteristics and qualities scouting promotes. You have broken barriers and have taken roads less traveled. In doing so, you stand as a role model to girls and young women. We thank you for your leadership, vision and inspiration.

girl scouts 
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Javaune Adams-Gaston, Ph.D.
President of Norfolk State University



As the seventh president of Norfolk State University (NSU), Javaune is committed to ensuring that NSU fulfills its mission and to ensuring the success of each student. Her vision is opportunity, access, affordability, growth, sustainability, and student excellence. A strong advocate for collaboration and developing strategic partnerships with stakeholders, Javaune cultivates strong connections among NSU alum and within the community. Under her leadership, NSU has achieved the status of a U.S. News and World Report Top Historically Black Colleges and Universities designation. Enrollment has steadily increased and the University realized record high operating revenues.

In addition, with her drive to improve, NSU expanded its online academic program curriculum to include a master's degree in Cybersecurity and has been recognized nationally. Under her leadership, the online master's degree in Cyber Psychology, the first in the nation, launched in 2020.

A recognized higher education leader, with a Ph.D. in psychology from Iowa State University, she is regularly invited as a speaker nationally and internationally. Her appointments and honors have included: President Biden's Appointment to the Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, U.S. Department of Commerce Industrial Advisory Committee, NCAA Board of Governors, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Board of Trustees, and Greater Norfolk Corporation Board of Directors.

As a leader, she believes that the more we give our time or resources to the issues we care about, the more others will give in return.

Did you know...?

Girl Scout alums attain higher levels of education than other women (78% compared to 65% attended at least some college).

Girl Scout
Famous Former
Honoree

Tonya Byrd

*Senior Policy Director (Community Engagement)
at Dominion Energy*



Whether at work or in her spare time, Tonya has a strong focus on STEM education, volunteerism, and community engagement. This Girl Scout alum is a native of Hampton, Virginia, and a graduate of Hampton High School. She earned her bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Howard University and a M.B.A. from George Washington University. With over 30 years at Dominion Energy, she currently leads Community Engagement efforts across the company's footprint. Prior positions include: engineer and senior nuclear training instructor at Surry Power Plant, supervisor of customer account management in Norfolk, and supervisor of electrical distribution design across the Hampton Roads Peninsula.

In 2008, Tonya was selected as a fellow for the Summer Institute for Nuclear Professionals at the University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

In 2012, she was featured in Black Engineering Magazine in an article titled, "Notable Blacks in Energy: They've Got the Power."

Tonya serves on many boards and is an active volunteer. Those boards include: Cheryl Jackson Tyler Foundation, Inc., Fort Monroe Foundation, and Tidewater Community College Educational Foundation. For her volunteerism and community activism, she was honored in 2019 as Volunteer of the Year (Community Vitality) by Dominion Energy.

Tonya exemplifies the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law through her dedication to helping others and sharing her mentorship and leadership to make the world a better place!

Did you know...?

Girl Scout alums are more satisfied with their careers than other women (68% compared to 60%) and slightly more likely to be in management positions at work (42% compared to 37%).

Girl Scout
Famous Former
Honoree

Sierrah Chavis

*Director Youth Opportunities at United Way
South Hampton Roads; Founder/CEO of Bossy Girl*



A dynamic educator and non-profit leader, Sierrah has been a passionate advocate for youth, especially those in underserved areas, for many years. With a deep commitment to inclusivity and equity, she started her journey earning a Master's of Education degree and later an Educational Specialist Degree in School Leadership and Administration.

Beyond her work at United Way, she is an author of impactful books that include, "No Shame in My Pain" and "From Pain to Power," along with a children's book titled, "Dance of Colors: Caribbean Rhythms and Family Traditions." Her writing extends to educational publications, blogs, and articles, further amplifying her advocacy interests. Sierrah is also the founder of Bossy Girl Inc., an organization dedicated to empowering girls and women and preparing the next generation of female leaders, CEOs and entrepreneurs.

Awards and recognitions for her advocacy include: the Diversity Champion Award from Old Dominion University, the Impact Leadership Award from the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and Teacher of the Year from Virginia Council for Learning Disabilities.

Did you know...?

Girl Scout alums are more likely to volunteer and be civically engaged, with studies showing they're more likely to volunteer and donate than non-alums. Girl Scout alums continue to stay connected, volunteer with their local councils, and share their experiences.

Girl Scout
Famous Former
Honoree

CDR Heidi Koski

*Commanding Officer of U.S. Coast Guard Base,
Elizabeth City*



Originally from Mocksville, North Carolina, this Girl Scout alum now calls Chesapeake, Virginia home. Her journey to become a Commanding Officer with the U.S. Coast Guard began when she graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 2004 where she earned a Bachelor's of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Upon receiving her commission as an officer, she reported to the CGC Vigilant in Cape Canaveral, Florida, as Student Engineer. Two years later, she reported to Naval Engineering Support Unit in Portsmouth, Virginia, where she served as Port Engineer. She then attended the University of Maryland where she earned her Master's of Science in Reliability Engineering. Her career journey included serving as Patrol Boat Systems Manager, Surface Forces Logistics Center Patrol Board Product Line Programmed Depot Maintenance Branch Chief and an assignment to Strategic Resource Branch, Coast Guard Atlantic Area responsible for budget planning and capability initiatives.

She believes leaders are individuals who guide or direct in a course by showing the way. Coast Guard senior leadership should possess the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity and these are exemplified in their adherence to the Coast Guard's core values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty.

Heidi has been recognized with two Meritorious Service Medals, two Coast Guard Commendation medals, the 2016 Captain Stratton Leadership award, and several other personal and unit awards.

Did you know...?

Girl Scout alums say they "bring people together to get things done," and 84% hold leadership roles as adults.

Girl Scout
Famous Former
Honoree

Wendy Scott, Ph.D.

Founder and Director of Tidewater Collegiate Academy at Virginia Wesleyan University



Wendy is the founder and director of the Tidewater Collegiate Academy, located at Virginia Wesleyan University. The school is an innovative homeschool serving a diverse group of PK-12th grade students. The curriculum, developed by Wendy, facilitates the development of global citizens and equips them with 21st century skills — preparing them to make the world a better place.

She has spent years as an educator learning how to help each individual student uncover their potential so they can realize their role and value as a global citizen. Before going to school full time to earn her Ph.D. from ODU, Wendy taught secondary, social science courses in public school for 10 years. She was named Brooke Point High School, Stafford County Teacher of the Year in 2005, Chesapeake Public Schools Teacher of the Year City-Finalist in 2009, Great Bridge Ruritans' Teacher of the Year in 2013, and Virginia Historical Society Teacher of the Year in 2017.

Today, she combines educational psychology, the cognitive sciences, research-based best practices, and practical experience to help families develop effective experiences. She believes that every young person was made for a purpose, and they deserve the opportunity to cultivate their strengths and gifts in a safe and caring environment so that they will be equipped to make their contribution in the world.

Did you know...?

Alums are more likely than other women to volunteer (48% compared to 33%) and contribute financially to causes they care about (62% compared to 47%).

Congratulations

Dr. Scott,

We are so proud of your recognition and are very honored that you are OUR Director. You have given our children a school program that connects to them on all levels; a home of safety, connectivity, and the tools to make the world a better place. Your mentorship to all of us parents as well as the students to be leaders and doers. It takes one person to create a spark that promotes the changes we want to see in the world. You are the spark and you give others the ability to see they can be a spark too. We LOVE you! Congrats!

Your TCA Parents, students, and faculty!

(TCA) is to facilitate the development of global citizens equipped with 21st-century skills ready to make the world a better place.



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*"The work of today is the
history of tomorrow and
we are the makers."*

Juliette Gordon Low

Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage,
confidence, and character,
who make the world a better place.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do,
and to respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

