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## **Girl Scouts announces 2023 Denver Metro Women of Distinction 11 Extraordinary Women Honored**

Each year, Girl Scouts of Colorado honors 11 exceptional women as Women of Distinction; one of these remarkable women is named the Woman of Distinction Gold, in recognition of a lifetime of achievement that has made a significant, lasting impact on our community. This year's honorees were selected by a committee of previous Women of Distinction honorees and chosen based on their contributions to the community, both professionally and personally. These women join a network of more than 500 WoD alums. They are shining examples of corporate, civic, and philanthropic leaders, who serve as role models for our female leaders of tomorrow.

### **2023      Woman of Distinction Gold**

- **Nancy Tuor**, former chief executive officer, Rocky Flats Accelerated Closure, board member, National Western Stock Show – Nancy's independent nature, willingness to embrace change and take calculated risks has led to a life she never could have imagined growing up in the suburbs of Portland, Oregon. Early in her business life, Nancy learned the value of developing allies among her male peers. (At that time in the engineering business, there were no female peers with whom to connect.) As a non-engineer in an engineering firm, she developed a reputation as someone who could be counted on to succeed in uncharted territory, whether new geographies or new technical and leadership challenges. Her willingness to say "yes" created opportunities around the globe, spanning nuclear clean-up in the United Kingdom to sustainable new town development in the United Arab Emirates.

Her most iconic and challenging leadership effort was the accelerated clean-up and closure of the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons production facility north of Denver, a \$7 billion, 10 year effort. Working with a dedicated team turning a vast contaminated area into a wildlife refuge decades ahead of schedule and at a fraction of the projected cost, while removing a significant health risk from the Denver community, was the highlight of her career. Her leadership in that effort led to the Del Hock Lifetime Achievement Award from the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce as well as numerous national engineering awards.

Since her retirement, Nancy has served on the board of governors for Colorado State University, including two years as chair and currently serves on the board of directors of the National Western Stock Show. She has also spoken both nationally and internationally on culture change and environmental sustainability topics.

### **Class of 2023, Women of Distinction**

- **Perla Gheiler**, director on Aging, Agency for Human Rights & Community Partnerships, City and County of Denver – In her role, Perla advocates for Denver’s older population by helping local agencies develop policies and programs that will improve the quality of life and accessibility to care and culture for aging residents. Raised by her grandparents in a strong, traditional Latino household, Perla built a successful career as a marketing strategist and now serves as the convener for aging adults and the Mayor’s office. She also serves as the liaison for the Commission on Aging, which advocates, empowers, and monitors the rights and concerns for our older adults. Perla held the position as director of strategic initiatives and outreach for MSU Denver and multicultural marketing development manager for America Family Insurance. Perla has been recognized by the Latina’s First Foundation as an Unsung Hero, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver as Corporate Advocate of the Year, and the Colorado Women’s Chamber as a Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business.
- **Margaret Hunt**, former director, Colorado Office of Creative Industries, Governor’s Office of Economic Development – Margaret recently retired after 10 years as director of the Colorado Office of Creative Industries, a position she was appointed to by Gov. John Hickenlooper and to which she brought experience in community and economic development from both the private, for-profit sector as well as state and local government. During her tenure leading CCI, she advanced the ability of artists throughout Colorado to find permanently affordable live/work space making it possible for them to thrive, and she accelerated the state’s Creative District Program, increasing the number of certified districts from 2 to 30. Such districts attract artists and creative entrepreneurs to a community, infusing new energy and innovation, which in turn

enhances the economic and civic capital of the community. When COVID hit, she established the Colorado Arts Relief Fund, which provided a total of \$23 million to individual artists and arts organizations during the pandemic to support a resilient post-pandemic economy. She also championed the Music Relief fund to help musicians and gig workers affected by venue closures. Working collaboratively with Governor Polis and legislative leaders, she successfully advanced \$80 million for Community Revitalization grants for mixed use projects to advance the arts and creative industries in projects across Colorado including the first permanent homes for iconic arts organizations and the adaptive reuse of numerous blighted and vacant historic buildings.

- **Adrienne Mansanares**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains –Prior to joining the staff of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, Adrienne served on PPRM's board for seven years and as board chair for two years. This experience, complemented by a diverse career in the nonprofit and philanthropic community along with grounding as a one-time patient and former community organizer, fuels her unique leadership of the organization. Adrienne's guiding vision shapes the experience hundreds of thousands of patients, activists, students, educators, and community members have with PPRM within its 4-state area of Colorado, New Mexico, Southern Nevada, and Wyoming. She leads a team of over 500 expert, passionate staff who care for nearly 100,000 patients each year through PPRM's 24 health and community centers, and via a robust and innovative telehealth program. Adrienne is a trustee with St. Elizabeth's School, an honorary trustee of the Women's Foundation of Colorado, a fellow with the Latino Leadership Institute, a member of the International Women's Forum, and a recipient of the 2014 Mayor's Diversity Award, the Center for Legal Inclusiveness' Inclusiveness@Work award, and one of Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce's 2022 Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business.
- **Carrie Morgridge**, co-founder, The Morgridge Family Foundation – Carrie Morgridge co-founded The Morgridge Family Foundation (MFF) with her husband John in 2008. Since then, they have invested more than \$150 million into their community. Now with an annual grant budget of more than \$11 million, the foundation aims to improve systems and help nonprofits scale. The Morgridges have been instrumental in transformative gifts in education, conservation, the arts, and health and wellness, supporting projects at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver Art Museum, National Jewish Health, University of Denver, Mile High United Way, CSU Spur, Colorado Mountain College and many more. MFF incubates projects in-house, like the Student Support

Foundation, the Morgridge Acceleration Program (MAP) and MFF Publishing, as part of their quest to change the world—or at least some systems. Carrie is an award-winning author and speaks internationally at education advocacy forums, poverty alleviation conferences, and many philanthropy-focused convenings. ~~and~~ She has twice been invited to the TED stage to share her ideas. Carrie received the distinguished Francis Wisebart-Jacobs Woman of the Year award from the Mile High United Way and was awarded the Every Gift Matters Award from the Colorado Distant Learning Association for her work and support of technology in rural Colorado.

- **Brittany Morris Saunders**, head of Community Affairs, Amazon – For more than 20 years, Brittany Morris Saunders has worked in Colorado politics shaping economic development efforts and policies across the state. Brittany serves as a key member of Amazon’s public policy team driving engagement with local stakeholders, business organizations, and community leaders in support of Amazon being the most trusted business and community partner in the Denver region. Under Brittany’s leadership, Amazon has distributed \$3.5 million to Colorado-based non-profit organizations and associations. This includes partnering with the City and County of Denver, Denver Public Schools, and Goodr to open two free grocery stores in DPS elementary schools. Prior to joining Amazon, she served as the senior vice president for economic development and public affairs for the Downtown Denver Partnership and held senior positions at Sewald Hanfling Public Affairs and CRL Associates. Brittany is a proud Denver Public Library trustee and Colorado Community College System Foundation board member.
- **Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler**, chief catalyst & founder, The Equity Project, LLC – Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler has distinguished herself as someone who bravely calls out systems of oppression that have held back women and girls, especially women and girls of color, for generations. She has devoted her life's work to combatting those systems through education, advocacy, and by developing tools to build more equitable, diverse, and inclusive communities. At The Equity Project, Dwinita supports organizations and communities in building diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies. Her career is marked by firsts: the first African American woman to hold the position of senior vice president and chief inclusion officer for Children’s Hospital Colorado and the first African American woman to serve as executive director of the Office of Human Resources for the City and County of Denver. Dwinita, a consultant accredited by the Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence and recipient of the Cornell University Diversity & Inclusion certification, is nationally recognized for her equity work with non-profit, community, government, and corporate organizations. Dwinita holds a doctorate in the field of organizational leadership, a master of arts degree in

management and a bachelor of science degree in education.

- **Ruth Rohs**, senior vice president of corporate communications and executive director, IMA Foundation – Ruth oversees internal communications, public relations, and corporate social responsibility for IMA Foundation. Ruth currently serves as vice-chair of the MSU Denver Foundation board of directors, and also serves on the boards of the Denver Public Schools Foundation, National Sports Center for the Disabled, and the Women's Foundation of Colorado. A breast cancer survivor herself, Ruth founded the Community Chest, a women's giving circle at the Women's Foundation of Colorado, made up of civic-minded breast cancer survivors designed to raise funds to support breast cancer causes and women's and girl's empowerment. Since its inception in 2019, the Community Chest has contributed more than \$100,000 in grants to fund breast cancer research and support other women going through the journey. The Community Chest launched a fundraising event in 2022 called Boobapalooza, a benefit concert featuring all female artists. The inaugural event netted \$86,000, resulting in two \$30,000 grants and the start of what will ultimately become a Community Chest endowment. As a lifelong fan of live music, Boobapalooza is the culmination of Ruth's passions.
- **Danielle Shoots**, Founding Partner & Managing Director, New Community Transformation Fund-Denver– Danielle has made her life's work the mission of building BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) wealth and leadership, challenging the philanthropic and investment communities to use the tools of wealth-building to increase investments in marginalized, undercapitalized people and communities. Danielle founded the New Community Transformation Fund-Denver, a \$50 million fund focused on early stage investing in high-growth companies founded, owned, and operated by historically underinvested members of the community. In addition, she has built a multimillion-dollar consulting and leadership development enterprise and a fund that invests in real estate and home ownership intended to build generational wealth for people of color. Danielle embarked on her executive leadership path at age 26, ascending to the position of CFO for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. After working for the state, she managed the Comcast West Division's billion-dollar capital portfolio, financial planning and analysis, mergers and acquisitions and a team of 60 employees in seven states. She also served as the chief financial officer for The Colorado Trust, where she grew the foundation's endowment from \$430 million to nearly \$600 million.

- **Hollie Velasquez Horvath**, regional vice president of State Affairs & Community Relations, Xcel Energy- Colorado – Hollie provides strategic leadership and management to a team of directors, managers, analysts, and lobbyists responsible for driving Colorado policy and business initiatives enabling best-in-class electric and gas service to Colorado customers. She also leads Xcel's philanthropic arm, supporting Colorado communities and customers with foundation grants, employee volunteerism and corporate sponsorships. Hollie is not only the first woman she is also the first Latina to hold this leadership position for Xcel Energy – Colorado. Since her early 20s, she has made an impact in her community through non-profit board service. She currently sits on the boards of Denver Health Authority, Downtown Denver Partnership Inc, Visit Denver, Aurora Economic Development Corporation, and the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado. Hollie recently received the Colorado Hispanic Contractors Champion Award, and in past years received the Downtown Denver Champion Award, Denver Business Journal 40 Under 40, and Colorado Women's Chamber Top 25 Most Powerful Women.
- **Linda Yip**, founder, Nathan Yip Foundation – Linda was born and raised in Taiwan and graduated from the Cultural College of Taiwan with a degree in political science. She came to the United States in the 1970s and has more than 25 years of leadership experience in real estate and land development, as well as insurance and business process outsourcing service. In 2001, Linda and her husband Jimmy lost their only child, Nathan, in a tragic car accident. Keeping the spirit of Nathan alive, the Nathan Yip Foundation reaches around the world to help youth in underserved communities by providing schools, education resources, and ongoing support. The Nathan Yip Foundation grew from a small group of friends to a foundation that, today, has raised millions of dollars to support education around the world. In 2011, Forbes Asia named Jimmy and Linda "Heroes of Philanthropy."

Girl Scouts of Colorado will welcome the Class of 2023 honorees from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Sept. 28, at the Stockyard Events Center at The National Western Center.

"I am honored to welcome this year's class of Women of Distinction. They are strong, bold, empowered women who represent the leadership and excellence that powers today's world, and they are outstanding role models for our girls," said Leanna Clark, chief executive officer of Girl Scouts of Colorado.

Proceeds from the event will support Girl Scouts of Colorado's crucial leadership development programs in entrepreneurship, outdoors, STEM, and life skills for more than 16,000 members across Colorado.

Event chairs are Kristen Blessman, Woman of Distinction '21, and Faye Tate, Woman of Distinction '03.

For information regarding tickets and sponsorships, visit [girlscoutsofcolorado.org](http://girlscoutsofcolorado.org) or contact Ashley Walsh at [ashley.walsh@gscolorado.org](mailto:ashley.walsh@gscolorado.org).

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