

*st. johns*  
**WOMEN**  
OF **DISTINCTION**

*The 5th Annual Celebration*  
Interactive Fundraising Event

*Thursday, September 23, 2021 11a.m.*

*Honoring local women whose accomplishments  
in careers and community service exemplify the values of Girl  
Scouts*

Presented by



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# The 5th Annual Celebration

## *Women of Distinction* *2021 Honorees and Mentees*

Emcee: Amelia Rogers-Neubarth  
*Girl Scout Cadette*

Honoree: Melissa Nelson  
*President & CEO*  
*United Way of St. John's County*  
Mentee: Alyce Bessman,  
*Girl Scout Ambassador*

Honoree: Tracie C. Snow  
*President*  
*Florida School for the Deaf & Blind*  
Mentee: Kimberly Hargrave  
Girl Scout Ambassador

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*Presenting Sponsor*



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BY AMY SUZANNE



*Bid on our silent auction items:*



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## **Melissa Nelson**

*United Way, St. John's County*

In March 2014, Melissa Nelson joined United Way of St. Johns County a collaborative relationship of residents, businesses, government, and non-profits that come together to meet the most pressing social service issues in St. Johns and Putnam counties, large and small.

Prior to joining UWSJC, her professional background in non-profit management includes experience working with local Chamber of Commerce organizations in Florida and Pennsylvania; and within the professional association setting with the American Institute of Architects and the Orange County Medical Society both in Orlando, Florida.

She's a graduate of the University of Florida, and of the US Chamber Institute for Organizational Management and multiple Leadership Programs.

A 20+-year resident of St. Johns County, Melissa is life-time resident of northeast Florida having spent her entire childhood in what used to be the sleepy little beach town of Fernandina Beach, now widely known as Amelia Island. Of course, her years as a Brownie and Girl Scout were as part of the Gateway Council.

She has been and is involved extensively in the community as a volunteer, board member and chair in the community with her church, SJC schools and civic organizations. Currently, commitments include serving on the state Board of Directors of United Way of Florida, Immediate Past-Chair of the Continuum of Care for St. Johns County, which addresses homelessness, and as President of the Rotary Club of St. Augustine.

Melissa is the mother of 24-year-old twins, Max and McKenna and has been married over 30 years to her college sweetheart, Brad. When Melissa gets a moment to herself, she loves to spend it at the beach with a great book or traveling someplace new – preferable in a different time zone and with a different language.



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## **Tracie C. Snow** *Florida School for the Deaf & Blind*

In November 2020, Tracie C. Snow started her journey as the 19th president for the Florida School for the Deaf & Blind in St. Augustine, Florida. The school serves eligible Pre-K and K-12 students who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. Tracie began her professional career at FSDB and is honored to have the opportunity to provide leadership to an incredible school that she loves with a mission that aligns to her passions. FSDB has also been an integral part of hers and her family's life with her wonderful husband, David, also working at the school and both of her boys, Seth and Ty, graduating from FSDB.

In her 26 years at FSDB, Tracie most recently was the administrator of Instructional Services where she provided campus-wide leadership in the implementation, monitoring and compliance for general education, specially designed instruction, and assessments for preschool through grade 12 students who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired and deafblind. Tracie also oversaw professional development initiatives, certification requirements for academic personnel and served as the school's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) director.

Before 2016, Tracie held progressively successive positions at FSDB as Deaf High School special needs teacher, Deaf Elementary School second grade teacher, Deaf Elementary reading specialist, and as director of Curriculum and Staff Development within Instructional Services. She was also involved with extracurricular activities, such as being the head coach of the girls' soccer team, sponsor for student council and Jr. National Association for the Deaf, providing ASL interpreting for events and meetings, and coordinating summer camps.

Tracie recently completed 10 years of service on the Florida Department of Education State Advisory Committee (SAC) the Education of Exceptional Students, serving as co-chair for two years. She provided policy guidance on education and related services for Florida's children with disabilities.

Tracie earned a bachelor's degree in Social and Rehabilitation Services and Elementary Education from Assumption College in Worcester, MA and a master's degree in Education from Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, followed by a second master's degree in Educational Leadership from the University of North Florida. She holds several Florida state certifications, including Educational Leadership.

Tracie has fond memories of growing up in a small town in Massachusetts and participating in Girls Scouts of America as a Brownie and a Junior. Wonderful summers were spent at sleep-away Girl Scout camp, setting goals and earning badges, selling cookies door-to-door, making Sit-Upons out of wallpaper and yarn, learning new skills, hiking, walking in parades, proudly wearing her uniform, bonding with her friends, and having her mom as her troop leader.

When not working, Tracie can be found cooking, baking, sewing, crafting, making jewelry, raising butterflies, flower gardening, providing service to others, finding ways to use glitter, and spending time with her amazing family.



# Girl Scouts of Gateway Council Board of Directors

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*st. johns*  
**WOMEN** *Past Honorees*  
OF **DISTINCTION**

**2017**

Tania Schmidt-Alpers  
Julia Click  
Jessica Evans  
Teresa Meares  
Kelly Smith  
Kelly R. Sullivan  
Pamela Way

**2018**

Martha Mickler  
Lura Readle-Scarpitti  
Joann Johnson  
Kelly Youngs  
Michelle Lewis  
Kelly Barrera

**2019**

Jeannette Bajalia  
Monique Keaton  
Megan Wall  
JuAnne Weeks

**2020**

Vanessa Garrison  
Jocelyn Spates  
Keri Matthews



# Invest in a Girl-Led Future.

**DONATE TODAY**



For more than 100 years, Girl Scouts have demonstrated the resilience, learned the skills, embraced the experiences, and cultivated the sisterhood that help them impact their communities today and accomplish big things tomorrow.

## **Now more than ever, girls need Girl Scouts.**

We know Girl Scouts prepares girls for moments like today. In a recent study of Girl Scouts alums, 75% said they learn from failures and setbacks compared to 66% of the general population, and 54% said they want to make a difference in their community compared to 46% of the general population. During this pandemic, Girl Scouts are stepping up in creative ways communities to give back and support their friends, neighbors, and each other. They are leading service projects in their communities and donating cookies to comfort front line workers. Girls are the leaders and innovators that our future world requires and being Girl Scouts gives them the tools they need to succeed. With your help, we can continue to create and optimize an environment where girls explore freely, expand their perspectives, and discover the unimaginable.

As Girl Scouts, they're part of a movement that encourages them to take action and supports their confidence to drive change. Your support will ensure all girls have access to our programs, regardless of background, geography, or financial situation. Help girls discover their untapped potential and watch as they become the leaders that our businesses, communities, and planet need.