2010 Celebration of Today’s Woman
Honors Linda Chemaly

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell is pleased to honor Linda Chemaly with the “Woman of Today Award” at the 2010 Celebration of Today’s Woman.

A lifelong resident of Greater Lowell, Linda has been actively involved in the community for many years, giving generously of her time and talents in support of numerous local organizations. Her willingness to serve and her desire to make a difference in the lives of others has led her to assume leadership positions in many community groups. These have included service as past president of Rape Crisis Services of Greater Lowell, fundraising chairperson at House Lowell General treasurer of the Saints Past president of the Scholarship Lowell Five Cent chairperson of the Parade Committee Women Working Committee, the St. Program, the Theater Board of 350th Celebration Board of Directors of Greater Lowell, and Committee.

Linda’s interest in giving back to the community has its roots in her childhood. In watching her parents, Edward and Josephine Krasnecki, publish their hometown newspaper for over fifty years, she developed an appreciation for the importance of a sense of community. After graduating from Northeastern University, Linda married John Chemaly in 1990. John shares Linda’s commitment to helping others, both in his role as President and CEO of Trinity EMS, and through his active leadership on many local boards. Together, they have led a number of initiatives that have had a significant positive impact on the local community. In 2002, both John and Linda received the Donna and Elkin McCallum Humanitarian Award given by the American Red Cross of the Merrimack Valley.

As a mother of three and grandmother to twin girls, Linda has sought to pass on to the next generation the values of community and service to others. Her generosity in sharing of her time, her resources, and herself are an inspiration to those who know her, and an example to everyone at Girls Inc. of what it means to be a ‘Woman of Today’. Linda is truly making a difference in the world around her.

Please consider joining us at the 2010 Celebration of Today’s Woman, as we salute Linda Chemaly and honor all women who work to make our communities better places to live.
**Girls Inc. Welcomes New Intern!**

Hello everyone, my name is Ashley Evans and for the next few months, I have the pleasure of interning here at Girls Inc. I’ve always had a passion for working with children and that passion has grown so much, just from interacting with the girls for only a few weeks!

Before coming to Girls Inc. I enjoyed working with children and teens at the Paul Center for the past six summers, where I received a lot of one-on-one interaction with children with disabilities. I am excited about continuing to build relationships with the girls, as I experienced during the summers at the Paul Center. I will be graduating from Fitchburg State College in May with a Bachelors Degree in Human Services and plan to go on to earn a Master’s Degree in Social Work.

I am very grateful to have this experience and the opportunity to work with such phenomenal girls and staff.

*Ashley interviewed Shailagh Brooks for the Member Spotlight on the back page!*

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**Girls With Goals Conference**

*for girls in grades 3-8*

This year’s Girls With Goals conference, being held on Saturday, April 17 from 9:00-3:00 at Girls Incorporated of Greater Lowell, will focus on the girls as individuals, their feelings, interests, health and hobbies as a girl and a future leader. The conference is for girls in grades 3-8 and will be broken up into morning workshops, which will focus on leadership, career choices, hobbies and self esteem building and afternoon workshops which will focus on mind and body and the benefits of leading a physically healthy and active lifestyle.

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**Upcoming Events!**

**Girls Inc. Summer Program 2010:** June 28 -> August 27

Girls Inc. gears up for the 2010 Summer Program with energetic staff, creative and innovative programs and lots of special summer events and collaborations! This nine week summer enrichment program will continue to offer swimming, free lunches, hands-on activities, mini-field trips to organizations and businesses in the downtown Lowell area and full day educational fun field trips. *for girls ages 5-14 years old!*

Don’t miss out, sign up now!  

Sign-ups begin April 1st
New Exciting Programs at Girls Inc.!

Self Defense

Medieval Sword Skills

Yoga

National Girls and Women in Sports Day!

In honor of the 24th annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day, Girls Inc. affiliates across the states celebrated the achievements of female athletes all over the world. Our Lowell affiliate provided a full week of hands-on team, self-esteem building and sports focused activities, including a “sports” party where participants engaged in four unique activity stations which included self-defense training, medieval sword fighting, making sports bracelets and yoga. All week, staff provided a variety of activities, from physical sports and fitness activities to art and media literacy programs. This year’s theme “Stay Strong, Play On” promoted perseverance and persistence in the face of difficulties, obstacles and discouragement for women and girls in the sports fields.

Navigating Across Cultures

Photo Essay Project

In October of 2009, Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell was chosen to be a pilot site for a Panasonic photo project, awarded to only 4 affiliates, which engaged girls in the critical examination of culture and its role in shaping their experiences and communities. Participants explored the meaning of culture in group discussions, were each given a camera to take photos of what culture meant to them, and created photo essays on how the pictures represented their idea of culture and its affect on their communities and everyday lives.

Mill City Girls

Our own groups of Mill City girls are learning about Lowell’s history, covering topics such as Lowell’s founding, its residents and development throughout the years. They are learning about famous “firsts” of Lowell, and how we all fit into the Lowell community: past, present, and future!

The program kicked off with a “How well do you know your city?” game-show-style quiz and a “mystery photo tour” in which girls identified pictures of locations around Lowell and learned a little more about these familiar locales. Some of the girls’ favorite tidbits are that Lowell High School was the first co-ed and desegregated high school in the country, and that the same sculptor -- Mico Kaufman -- created a lot of the local statues the girls recognized (for starts, take a look across the street at Whistler!)

The girls pieced together a timeline of Lowell’s history, including map layouts, labor movement events, clothing and cars, immigrant groups and schools. From this, they have been able to put new information into perspective! They have done additional research into different time periods by listening to music of that era, looking at maps of the city and examples of the clothing styles back then!

To bring to life the story of how Francis Cabot Lowell memorized details of the power loom and then re-constructed one here, the girls rebuilt a creative invention from memory, and had a great time sketching schematics and using teamwork to re-create the device. To learn more about immigration, the girls filled out forms in an unknown language, unwittingly assigning themselves new names and housing and homework situations. Truly an eye-opening experience!

In addition to hands-on “re-creation” activities, the girls are learning some basic research skills and have opportunities to seek information of their own interest. The girls are learning about primary and secondary sources, and are using internet resources and live interviews to learn more about our collective past. At the end of the program, the girls will share some of their favorite discoveries with the Girls Inc. community.
Girls Inc. WISH LIST

DVD/VHS Player
Boom Box CD/Radio Player
Expo Markers for White Boards
Arts and Craft Supplies
Blender
Carrot Shredder

Girls Inc. appreciates all donations!

Member Spotlight: Shailagh Brooks

Shailagh Brooks has been a member at Girls Inc for 2 years. She was a Member of the Month twice and was also nominated Member of the Year in 2009. She has been involved in many Girls Inc programs including “Build It”, American Textile Museum, Media Lit, Quilting, the Babysitting Club, as well as the Book Club. She is also a leader in the Intro to Computers class, the Talent Show class, Build It, Gardening, and will soon be helping to run the softball activity with Marlene!

Shailagh likes that Girls Inc. gives girls a ‘door’ into new things and there is a variety of personalities and viewpoints here! She enjoys running different classes because it gives her a feeling of being responsible, and she likes to teach and help the other girls! She wants to help them be able to experience new activities and challenges!