2014 Celebration of Today’s Woman
Honoring Carol S. Duncan

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell is pleased to honor Carol S. Duncan with the “Woman of Today Award” at the 2014 Celebration of Today’s Woman. To those who have had the good fortune to work with Carol during her twenty-two year tenure as Executive Director of Girls Inc., there is a great sense of satisfaction in being able to honor the immense impact that she has had on our organization, and on the community in which we live. Her razor-sharp intelligence, thoughtful decision-making, strong communication skills, quiet wisdom, and patient determination all distinguish Carol as an inspiring role model for young women. But it is her kind and generous heart that make an indelible mark on the lives that Carol touches.

Carol’s energetic leadership has enabled Girls Inc. to fulfill its mission while positioning the organization for future growth and stability. Under Carol’s stewardship, all mortgage debt on the facility was retired and significant improvements were completed with grants and contributions raised. Her grant writing talents, persistent follow-up with funding sources, and willingness to reach out to new ‘friends’ to share in the Girls Inc. mission provided resources for the development of numerous new programs, many of which received national recognition, and all of which will have a lasting impact on the girls they serve. Eight of these programs developed by Carol’s staff received awards from the National Girls Incorporated organization, and Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell was twice named the Outstanding Affiliate in the medium budget category. Carol’s leadership talents soon led to an invitation to serve on the Board of Directors of Girls Incorporated at the national level.

Most recently, Carol led the initiative to create a Teen Center at Girls Inc. by renovating unused space on the third floor of the Worthen Street facility. Leading the fundraising, planning, and implementation for this project, Carol was able to fill a need in the lives of many Girls Inc. members who were outgrowing the existing programming. The new space makes it possible to extend the safe, nurturing environment of Girls Inc. to girls in their teen years, and to launch new teen-specific programs to meet their needs. The Carol S. Duncan Teen Center will be a lasting legacy of kindness and generosity.

Carol’s impact on the local community extends well beyond her work at Girls Inc. She has held leadership positions on boards of numerous educational, cultural, and social service organizations in the community. These include the Pollard Memorial Library Foundation, the Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Lowell General Hospital Auxiliary, College Club of Greater Lowell, Merrimack Lyric Opera Company, Career Beginnings and New Horizon mentoring programs at Lowell High School and Middlesex Community College, Women in Science and Engineering, Lowell Telecommunications Corporation, the American Society of Clinical Pathology, the Florence Crittenton League of Lowell, Rape Crisis Services of Greater Lowell, the People’s Club of Lowell, and many others. She was a founder of the D’Youville Manor Ladies Guild and the Women Working Wonders Fund. She has received numerous awards in recognition of her leadership and service to the local community, including the Notre Dame Academy Medallion Award for Service and Philanthropy, the Community Service Award from the American Textile History Museum, the ATHENA Award, the President’s Award from Community Teamwork, Inc. and many others.

A graduate of Brown University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations, and of Boston University with a Master of Arts degree in English and Education, Carol possesses a natural curiosity and love of learning that has driven her to travel the world exploring its many varied cultures and peoples. And always she has returned home renewed in her dedication to share this passion for learning with others. From her early career as a teacher, to her devotion to raising her family, to her time spent with Girls Inc. members, to mentoring and supporting her staff, to working tirelessly on countless non-profit boards and initiatives, Carol humbly and wholeheartedly offers her talents, her time, and her service to make this community a better place to live, a place where opportunities for education and cultural enrichment are available to all. She is a truly inspiring ‘Woman of Today’!
A Message from Our New Executive Director!

Dear Friends of Girls Incorporated of Greater Lowell,

It is with great pleasure that I greet you as a new member of Girls Inc. I look forward to leading the Greater Lowell team in delivering on the Girls Inc. mission of inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold.

Before coming to Girls Inc., I dedicated more than 16 years in various roles in the Human Service and Non-Profit Industries. Through my personal and professional experiences with a diverse population of varying abilities, needs and ages, it is my passion to make sure that all individuals have access to supportive community based services and opportunities that will allow a change for the better in their lives. I believe there is always potential for everyone to make progress. Although not originally from the Lowell area, I have lived locally for more than 20 years. I am married and the mother of two young boys. I am a graduate of Middlesex Community College with an A.S., Suffolk University with a B.S., and Suffolk University Sawyer School of Management with a MBA.

At Girls Inc. we passionately believe in the power of philanthropy to change lives and build a stronger community. Whether you're new to Lowell, or just want to explore philanthropy in your area, we invite you to join us in a bold undertaking to prove that a city so rich in resources can be a city where all of our residents find an opportunity to thrive.

With an engaged board, experienced staff, and close ties with several nonprofits serving Lowell, we are uniquely situated to identify local needs, forge collaborations, and create solutions. As a community organization, we embrace the mission of working with donors to build charitable funds and resources to make these solutions happen. As we continue to grow our programs and seek innovative ways to serve our girls with limited resources, Girls Inc. is always looking for people and organizations that are willing to support our new community based initiatives. If you are interested in helping us to grow our projects and services, please consider volunteering, partnering or making a financial investment, this would allow you to make an immediate impact or create a permanent legacy on issues you care about.

I am honored to be working for Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell and with the wonderful staff, volunteers, donors and community. I hope to share this special place and encourage more people to embrace our vision and future. For more information on how you can help, feel free to contact me at tingersoll@girlsinclowell.org. We look forward to working with everyone to continue changing challenges into opportunities!

Sincerely,

Tracy Reilly Ingersoll

Volunteer Spotlight

Wanda Royte
I was first introduced to Girls Inc. during my years supporting the President and Senior Administration at Saints Medical Center in Lowell. Upon retiring from Saints, I knew that given the choice of various volunteer opportunities in the Lowell community, my first choice would be working with the wonderful girls and staff at Girls Inc. I am so pleased to be a small part of Girls Inc.’s programs that provide an array of hands-on educational and fun learning experiences.

Anne Chudnofsky
Hi, my name is Anne Chudnofsky and I am a graduate of University of Massachusetts, Amherst and the proud mother of two grown children. Girls Inc. has been a great opportunity to be able to mentor and empower young girls of tomorrow. It is the highlight of my week when I get to see their smiles (sometimes not smiling) and to be able to interact and be a positive role model and listener.

Joellen Scannell
I grew up in Lowell, went to the Lowell Schools and then after college went on to be a teacher in both Lowell and Weymouth. I was also an assistant principal and a principal in Duxbury and in Cambridge Massachusetts. Now, I work as a museum teacher at the Tsongas Historical Center (Boott Mills). I have enjoyed working with young people from pre-school to high school. I came to volunteer at Girls’ Inc because I love working with young people and have been so impressed both with the motivated and talented young women who attend Girls Inc. and with those who are on the staff. I love doing homework with the girls!
The After School Winter/Spring semester has many exciting new programs that focus on health and wellness, culture, literacy, and the arts. Our Mind + Body National initiative, which focuses on nutrition, stress management, and physical fitness, emphasizes support for holistic health and has inspired us to provide programs such as, Yoga, Gymnastics, and Meditation.

Mondays have become very musical as we have introduced our latest class called Ukalady, which teaches the girls the history of the ukulele, how to play chords and ends with a sing along. We love learning about cultures and have dedicated a whole day to it! Women’s Culture Wednesday, Cultural Cooking, and Trip Around the World all give the girls exposure to the art, food, traditions, and important women of other countries. These programs also give the girls an opportunity to share their own heritage and cultural background with the group. Book club, the Latina Initiative, and the Edgar Allan Poe classes are back this semester! We are also excited to introduce Louisa May Alcott as our newest author of study. The Little Women, Big Achievers program will involve book creations, theater, history, and a field trip as Louisa May lived right outside of Lowell in Concord Massachusetts.

Our newest collaboration with Junior Achievement has allowed us to teach Our City, a class that educates students on the basics of financial literacy, how businesses manage money and city planning deals with issues such as zoning and characteristics of an urban community. Some of the concepts the girls learn are banking, circular flow of money, economic development, entrepreneurship, and taxes.

We are also excited to offer Mixed Media again this semester instructed by Lolita Demers, a resident artist at the Brush art Gallery and art teacher in the Lowell Public Schools. The girls will be working on projects such as floral arranging, jewelry design, painting, and found object sculptures.

The UML female soccer club is having a blast working with our girls! Some of the skills our members are gaining are learning soccer drills, team building workshops, and how to properly dribble a ball. We are eager to have such strong role models mentoring and supporting our girls.

To paraphrase a quote from bestselling author Caroline A. Shearer, our aim is to get these girls out of their comfort zone and applaud them for their bravery. The Girls Inc. Teen Center Program has been having quite the exciting year getting out of our comfort zones! We kicked the year off promoting healthy body image, showing how staying healthy can and should be fun with a Zumba® class. Also, thanks to a former Girls Inc. member, Kelsey Barowich, the teens were able to take a tour of UMASS Amherst. While they were checking out the lovely campus, the girls also got to unite forces with Girls Inc. of Holyoke and participate in the University’s iCons program which seeks to provide scientific solutions to global problems such as natural and environmental disasters. Furthering our STEM exploration, we just started our first dissection on a dogfish shark! In the coming weeks, we will be dissecting sheep brains, starfish, and other cool creatures.

In other exciting news, American Textile History Museum (ATHM) in partnership with the Amelia Peabody Foundation brought an exciting program to Girls Inc. called “Threads of Learning”. Every Tuesday for the last few months, the teens have been learning how to run their own business and the entrepreneurship principles behind it. The advertising they did at Winterfest was so successful that they almost sold out all of their products at ATHM’s Super Saturday event!

The girls are constantly working hard and pushing themselves, while discovering a relationship with themselves. They get a great chance to explore and identify what healthy relationships can look like in our Get Real Workshop funded by the PREP grant. Lowell Community Health Center generously shared the time and wisdom with our teens, to convey the importance of making responsible, informed choices. They emphasized how uninformed choices can adversely affect goals and career choices in the future. We’re excited to continue this programming, along with curricula from the Junior Achievement Program. Not only will the teens be learning through this program, but they will also be running a program with the 5-7 year olds, which reinforces their leadership skills! We are looking forward to further fostering of leadership skills through our partnership with Ironstone Farms. They have graciously chosen us to pilot a Women Working Wonders Equine Encounter Teen Leadership Program during April Vacation. There are so many great things to look forward to with our awesome teens! Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell is so very grateful for the community members who are working with us to make this teen program more and more successful!

Girls Inc.’s Outreach program is doing some wonderful things this year. We are currently serving several schools in Lowell along with local Housing Authority sites. Our school sites are enjoying the world of S.T.E.M., getting messy, and expanding their mind through exploration!

We have exiting future partnerships planned this Spring and Summer with Lowell High School and various refugee groups. This shows that Girls Inc.’s Outreach Program is on the rise!
Since earning my bachelors degree in Psychology, I have enrolled in the masters program at UMass Lowell, studying Community Social Psychology. I chose this field because one day I hope to own a nonprofit that provides services to at-risk youth. I love working with youth and have a background as a Therapeutic Mentor and as a Skills Specialist. These experiences along with my passion for helping children throughout their development stages is what brought me to Girls Inc.

For the past six months I have had the pleasure of working with an extremely dedicated Girls Inc. staff and inspiring young ladies. I have implemented and assisted with various programs that evoke cultural competency, team building, academic achievement, and leadership skills. I initiated a grade competition to inspire girls to reach academic merit, and continue to assist in weekly workshops that highlight the culture of multiple countries. I have also collaborated with UMass Lowell's women's soccer team to develop a soccer workshop. Although my time here has been short, I am extremely dedicated to bringing fun, new, and exciting programs to the members of Girls Inc. It has been an amazing experience thus far and I can't wait to see what lies ahead!

I am very excited to be the new "Healthy You" intern for Spring 2014! I am a senior at UMass Lowell, studying for a bachelor degree in Community Health Education. For the past 4 years, I have been a phlebotomist at North Shore Medical Center. At UMass Lowell, I am an executive board member for the Community Health Education Club (CHEC) where I serve as director of social media. I believe that is important to teach children about living healthy because education is a key factor in how a person acquires and maintains a healthy lifestyle. So I will be helping to build the "Healthy You" program at Girls Inc.

My primary goal is to run a NASA based program titled, "Train Like an Astronaut", set forth by Michelle Obama’s "Let’s Move" campaign which encourages children to become more physically active by participating in fun, healthy activities. The girls will follow specific exercises that involve agility, strength training and hand-eye coordination, (motor skills used by astronauts during space travel)! I am very excited to teach the girls about living a healthy lifestyle that includes both body and mind!