2015 Celebration of Today’s Woman
Honoring Naomi Prendergast

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell is pleased to honor Naomi Prendergast with the “Woman of Today Award” at the 2015 Celebration of Today’s Woman.

Throughout her distinguished career, Naomi has been a passionate advocate for quality health care, skilled nursing services, and comprehensive wellness care delivered in an environment of compassion, respect, and dignity. As President and CEO of D’Youville Life & Wellness Community since 2004, she has successfully shepherded the organization’s growth from a skilled nursing center to a provider of a full continuum of care to senior residents in a community setting. She has overseen the development of Bruyere Gardens, a 63-unit independent living facility for low-income seniors, The Center for Advanced Therapy, a 33-bed short-term inpatient rehabilitation facility, and The Saab Residence, a 60-unit assisted living residence scheduled to open in fall 2015. Her leadership was also instrumental in establishing The Caring Well Institute, which provides education and training for health professionals and the general public.

Recognized by The Boston Globe in October 2014 when D’Youville was ranked #20 of the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts, Naomi is a true leader in her field and in her community. She serves as a member of the Massachusetts Senior Care Association Board of Directors, the Circle Health Board of Governors, the Circle Home Board of Directors, the UMass Lowell Nursing Advisory Board, the Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union Board of Directors, and the Rotary Club of Lowell.

A graduate of Boston University with a Master in Public Health degree, and a licensed Nursing Home Administrator with over 30 years of health care administration experience, Naomi began her career at Boston City Hospital and has held executive leadership positions at Radius Management Services in Framingham MA, Grosvenor Park Nursing Center in Salem MA, and the ADS Group in Newton MA.

Naomi and her husband, Kevin, are residents of North Andover, and are the proud parents of two grown sons.

Girls Inc. is honored to celebrate Naomi Prendergast as the 2015 ‘Woman of Today’ for her dedicated service to her community, her family, and the countless individuals who have received competent, compassionate care under her stewardship. Her quiet confidence, thoughtful intelligence, and focus on service to others embody the values of the Girls Inc. mission and serve as a shining example for the girls of today as they strive to become the women of tomorrow.

SAVE THE DATE!

The 2015 Celebration of Today’s Woman Gala will be held on Thursday, June 4th from 6 to 9 pm at the UML Inn & Conference Center.
Hello Board Members, Parents, Donors and Friends of Girls Inc.,

It is with great pleasure that I thank the agency for this exciting new opportunity. Being employed with Girls Inc. has given me a wealth of professional and personal pride and fulfillment, and the chance to be more integrated in the agency is a tremendous privilege that I respect and cherish.

I have numerous years of experience working with children, in private homes and classrooms and am passionate about creating fun, involved and safe learning environments. Being a part of the girls' learning experience is an amazing opportunity. I have truly enjoyed developing programs that are intentional and challenging for all age groups, as well as myself. I look forward to developing my own programs to better serve our girls and our community. Programs that are well rounded and support academic, social, emotional and physical well-being are imperative for our girls and our agency’s continued growth. Integrating college readiness across all age groups, as well as community service is one of my top priorities. I look forward, in my new position, to exploring partnerships and affiliations with Lowell's rich and diverse community. It is through these partnerships with local agencies that we will be able to introduce new ways of thinking and new ways of learning to our members.

In addition to my passion for college preparation and community service, I have a love of science and engineering. It is important to me that members have consistent and sustained exposure to these fields and experience them in ways that are interesting and comprehensive. In our efforts to overcome gender discrimination it is crucial that we encourage young girls to pursue studies and employment that are traditionally male dominated. I believe every girl has the right to chase her passion and try to pass this belief on to members by showing them my own passions.

**Being a Girls Inc. girl has inspired and excited me.**

Every day I come to work filled with commitment and dedication to inspire and excite our members about the opportunity we have all been afforded at Girls Inc.: to be strong, smart and bold.

---

**Carol S. Duncan Teen Center**

*“Tell me what it is you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” ~Mary Oliver*

The focus this year for the Girls Inc. Teen Center has been identifying and working towards passions, goals and dreams. Every day, the Teen Center begins with reading an excerpt from a book called *Take 5 for Your Dreams: five minutes of daily goodness to make your one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-on-this-planet-again life all that it is meant to be.* This book ensures that the teens are thinking about their passions daily and helps to expand their thoughts on how they can create successful futures by taking small action steps. One of the goals of Teen Coordinator Maritza Grooms is to expose the teens to as many opportunities as possible, thereby giving them more options to choose from.

The Teen Center partnered with Middlesex Community College by meeting on Motivation Mondays for College Career Navigation. They learned about the application process for college, and that there are so many different majors out there to choose from. They took the Career Cluster Inventory and discovered how their passions can match up with their dream careers. A partnership with UMASS Lowell helped some girls discover their passion for engineering and technology in the Learn to Code Program. Other girls realized they have a knack for home development in the Design Your Dream Home class and are now considering pursuing a career in Architecture. While exploring their passions, the teens also learned about resume building, interview skills, and money management in the Job Ready class and Futures and Options Economic Literacy Program. In a partnership with Lowell General Hospital, Girls Inc. hosted a Career Day where the teens learned about the multitude of career options that are available in a hospital setting aside from traditional medical careers.

Girls Inc. Alumna of the Year, Kelsey Barowich organized a Day In the Life of a College Student at UMASS Amherst. The teens sat in on actual college classes. Afterwards, the girls were led on a tour of the Architecture Studio. The day came to a close with a pane designed by the Teen Center and the aspiring architects with the phrase: five minutes of daily goodness to make your one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-on-this-planet-again life all that it is meant to be.

The recurring theme of this trip was how each and every student we encountered was full of passion and enthusiasm for what they were studying. The teens definitely learned that their college dreams are within their reach!

Along with exploring passions and dreams, the teens learned the importance of giving back to their community and how that adds to the fulfillment of life. The Girls Inc. Teens have volunteered their time at Lowell General’s Fall Festival and Family Safety Fair, St. Paul’s Kitchen, and Ironstone Farms. A passion-filled life can only be successful if one is also making healthy, positive choices. In collaboration with Lowell Community Health Center’s Teen Block, Girls Inc. hosted Get Real: Healthy Relationships Retreat during February Break. The teens learned that they can make proud choices when it comes to their health and relationships and inspire their peers to do the same.
After-School Center

Since the fall, we have had some innovative and exciting new programs and opportunities for our girls. Our I’m in the News class gives girls the opportunity to learn about the filming process through hands on experiences in writing, editing, and producing news to highlight what is going on in the Center. The girls are currently creating a movie trailer for the summer program and a PSA for Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell.

Fairy Fables, our newest Little Women, Big Achievers program, allows the girls to explore Louisa May Alcott’s works from her very beginning years as a writer. The girls read some of Alcott’s works, learn about what a fable is and explore more modern fairy fables in print and film. Girls also experience the creative writing process for themselves; have the opportunity to draft their own fairy fables, illustrate, and write their own books.

GLEE, and School of Rock are our two newest musical classes offered this semester. In GLEE the girls have been learning the song Safe and Sound and choreography to go with the lyrics. School of Rock has allowed us to provide girls with the opportunity to learn multiple instruments with the goal of creating a Girls Inc. band. We have received keyboards from community members, an electrical drum set from Anne Chudnofsky, our long time volunteer, as well as bongos, an acoustic guitar, microphones, shakers, and tambourines through the Community Development Block Grant.

Our community partners have graciously given their time to provide strong programming to our girls. The UMASS Lowell’s Women’s Basketball Team spent their fall semester running drills and workshops for our girls. Our members loved learning how to play the game and were so excited to see their favorite college role models each week. The team was fantastic and even provided our girls and their families with multiple free tickets to their games. In November we had a visit from Raytheon where the girls learned all about how the technology of 3D printing is changing the world. The girls were surprised that these printers not only make new products but can also create things such as human limbs and transplantable organs to save lives. The girls were fortunate enough to participate in two Economic Literacy programs hosted by Jeanne D’Arc Credit Union in February. They learned about the difference between needs vs. wants and discussed where they can get money and how they can save it, as well as attended an entrepreneurship workshop where they created a business proposal that took into consideration staffing, hours of operation, sales pitches, marketing materials, supplies and budgets.

As well as all these strong programs we continue to focus on the health and wellness of our girls. In the Simple Smoothies program the girls create fruit and vegetable drinks, learn about the health benefits of the various foods and create recipe cards that will soon become a cookbook. In Passport to Nutrition the girls make simple snacks and meals with new foods they may have never tried before like Eggplant pizzas, yogurt parfaits, blueberry vegan cheesecake cups, and peanut butter oatmeal powerbites. This program teaches the girls how to make new meals and snacks as well as educates them about health benefits and how foods affect the body.

Outreach

The girls involved with the Math PLUS pilot program will host a presentation on March 27th to Girls Inc. members and their parents. They’ve seen real-life applications of math by visiting the New England Quilt Museum and noting the tessellations used, discovering the math involved in double dutch and how pertinent it is to running a business when they visited Downtown Lowell’s Humanity Boutique, owned by Ani Vong, a young businesswoman who followed her dreams and is now living the life she imagined when she was a child.

Girls enrolled in our Outreach program were able to assist Maxine Farkas of Western Ave. Studios who took on a public art project for the city of Lowell entitled “Be a Voice for Women” where she gathered stories, poems and works of art from women in Lowell that highlighted their resilience and drive. As part of Outreach, the C.W. Morey School took part in this project by creating their own works of art and motivational sayings for the Lowell public. Their work can be seen on Merrimack Street where City Dance Wear used to be.

In Outreach, the girls were also able to meet Kristala L. Jones Prather Associate Professor and MacVicar Faculty Fellow in the Dept. of Chemical Engineering at MIT visited the outreach program at the C.W. Morey School to speak about her career as an engineer, the intersection of science and math and had the girls begin the process of growing their own bacteria in Petri dishes from their very own fingertips! Kristala then visited the Carol S. Duncan Teen Center to speak about her journey to being a professor, the basic principles of math and science and how they apply to everything from building bridges to creating buildings and even helped a member with her science homework! We are so grateful that Professor Pranther took the time to serve as a mentor to our Girls Inc. members and are looking forward to working with her again in the future!
To:

Member Spotlight

Our long time member Amber Maker, and Lowell resident, was recently given the opportunity to create a project that would positively impact the community. Her passion for mermaids, all things aquatic, and love for young children inspired Amber to write a project proposal through Aaron’s Presents. This proposal allowed Amber to read to children dressed as a Mermaid and run a hands-on activity while serving as a positive role model. Aaron’s Presents offers kids in 8th grade and below the opportunity and resources they need to dream up and carry out positive projects that benefit others. Amber recently received an Aaron’s Presents grant to create her costume with the help of designer and seamstress Denise Webb of the American Textile Museum. Through this collaboration, Amber was able to use the Museum as venue for her project during the week of February Vacation. Amber ran her program on Wednesday February 18th for the community. Amber is also going to be profiled in an exhibit of positive things happening in Lowell at Mill No. 5 in March, done by a local nonprofit, Made In Lowell, formerly known as One27Global.

SAVE THE DATE!

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell
Summer Enrichment Program
Runs June 29 till August 21
To reserve your daughters spot, SIGN UP TODAY!

Girls Incorporated of Greater Lowell
220 Worthen Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 458-6529
www.girlsinclowell.org