Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell will host its Celebration of Today's Woman on June 7, 2018. This year will mark the Celebrations 25th anniversary of honoring local women that are making a difference in our community. On the culmination of 100 years of service to the girls of Greater Lowell and in recognition of the Celebration Anniversary, Girls Inc. is pleased to honor three women: Mary Sampas, an accomplished woman who forged the way both for the women of her time and of today; Yun-Ju Choi, a distinguished woman of today; and Lianna Kushi, a woman whose enthusiasm and accomplishment will light the way for the women of tomorrow.

Mary Boutselis Sampas was born in Lowell in 1917, the child of Greek immigrants. Always an avid reader and scholar, Mary quickly excelled academically and was encouraged by her teachers at the Bartlett School and Lowell High School to pursue her dreams of becoming a writer. In the 1930’s, as a senior in high school, she began writing a column on Greek news for the Lowell Sun. This was the beginning of Mary’s journalism career, which would span over 75 years and include columns for the Lowell Sun, the Lowell Evening Leader and the Greek Sunday News as well as the Lowell Evening Leader and the Greek Sunday News. Much of her work was written under various pen names including ‘Gal Friday’, ‘Lowellita’, and ‘Pertinax’. Among her favorite columns were the first-hand accounts she wrote in 1961 from Europe when she covered President and Mrs. Kennedy’s tour during which the President met with Khrushchev in Vienna and de Gaulle in Paris, and when Jacqueline Kennedy went on to visit Greece. Over the course of her career, Mary met and interviewed numerous celebrities for her columns, bringing them to life for her readers.

In 1940, Mary married fellow-journalist Charles Sampas, with whom she shared a life-long love of writing, literature, travel, world events, and politics. Their daughter, Marina, was her joy, and sometimes became an inspiration for some of her columns. Always eager to give back to the city she loved, Mary served on the boards and fundraising committees of numerous local non-profit organizations, including the Lowell Art Association, Community Concerts, the Hellenic Heritage Society, the Hellenic Culture Society, the Brush with History Gallery, the Folk Festival and Regatta Committee, “F.L.I.C.K.S.!” the Lowell Garden Club, the Lowell Historical Society, the Friends of the Pollard Memorial Library, and many others. Mary was passionate about her family, her friends, her community, and her work. On January 8, 2011, Mary’s final column was published in the Lowell Sun, dictated from her hospital bed just days before she passed away peacefully at the age of 93. Her passion for what she loved did not fade, and it lives on in the example that she set for those who knew her. (Continued on page 2)
Yun-Ju Choi is a devoted community development professional who has spent the last 25 years in leadership roles at community-based non-profit organizations. Currently the Executive Director of the Coalition for a Better Acre, Yun-Ju is focused on furthering the growth of the CBA in its mission of community revitalization and resident empowerment. A graduate of Bowdoin College with a Bachelors in Physics, and of Cambridge College with a Masters in Management, Yun-Ju began her career as a financial analyst, but soon discovered a passion for working with people when she accepted a position as a live-in staffer with young people who were in state custody. This marked the beginning of a new career in the non-profit sector. Applying her strong financial background and management skills has allowed Yun-Ju to make a real impact in her leadership roles at Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, Youth Opportunity Boston, Lena Park Community Development Corp., Center for Health and Development, The Boston Foundation, and Madison Park Development Corporation.

Yun-Ju is very active in her community personally as well as professionally, serving on the boards of several organizations, including the Whistler House Museum of Art, the Merrimack Repertory Theatre, the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Mill City Community Investment, Lowell Development Finance Corp., Lowell Heritage Partnership, Lowell Collegiate Charter School, Lowell House, Inc., and Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association. Her dedication to her community and her tireless efforts to help others are an inspiration to all.

Lianna Kushi is part of the founding team of Entrepreneurship for All (known as E for All), a non-profit whose mission is to accelerate economic and social impact through entrepreneurship in mid-sized cities. Originally founded in 2010 under the name Merrimack Valley Sandbox, E for All is now active in five cities in Massachusetts. Lianna now serves as the Executive Director of E for All in Lowell and Lawrence. A graduate of Smith College where she earned both a Bachelor’s Degree and a Masters in Economics and Social Development of Regions, Lianna is committed to entrepreneurship and community development. She has given of her time and enthusiasm in service to several local organizations, including the Asian American Commission of the Commonwealth of MA, the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, the Cultural Organization of Lowell, the Revolving Museum, the U.S.-Japan Council, and Harvard University’s Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Program on U.S.-Japan Relations. Her dedication and devotion to her community are sure to inspire leaders of the future.

Girls Inc. is proud to honor Mary, Yun-Ju, and Lianna at the 2018 Celebration of Today’s Woman. We are so grateful for the shining example they set for our Girls Inc. members, who, like these women, strive to be strong, smart, and bold in making their world a better place.

SAVE THE DATE!

**2018 Celebration of Today’s Woman**

**25th Anniversary Gala**

**Honoring Mary Sampas, Yun-Ju Choi, and Lianna Kushi**

Will be held on Thursday, June 7th
From 6 to 9 pm
at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center

For more information, visit:
[http://girlsinclowell.org/be-inspired/celebration/](http://girlsinclowell.org/be-inspired/celebration/)
Investing in the Next 100 Years Means Investing in Our Girls

Former Executive Director Carol Duncan, was a longtime believer in the value of endowments. She began the Girls Inc. Endowment Fund at Enterprise Bank in the early 1990’s with some consolidated CD’s totaling about $60,000. The account grew slowly with small, unexpected gifts and portions of the annual drive. “I think too many not-for-profits live ‘hand-to-mouth’ with ongoing concerns about deficits, making payroll, etc.” stated Carol. And she always felt comforted knowing that the fund was there in case of a real emergency.

Earlier this winter, a very generous anonymous donation was made to Girls Inc. to boost our Endowment Fund up near the 1 million dollar mark. This was the initial goal when the endowment was started twenty-five years ago and now that investment in our future has come true.

To continue this momentum of moving forward and to commemorate Girls Inc.’s 100 years of programs, services and mentorship to Greater Lowell girls and young women, a permanent bench will be placed in our front garden. Honoring 100 STRONG, SMART, and BOLD women from our community.

To help further our impact in our community and look ahead to the next 100 years, the funds collected will be invested in the Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell Endowment Fund. A dedication ceremony will be held this fall to unveil the bench and celebrate all the women that are honored.

You can set your name in stone to secure our future and help us build our endowment. For more information about the Bench Project, please visit http://girlsinclowell.org/news-events/

Equal Earners, Savvy Spenders

Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell was selected to participate as a pilot site to implement a revised Girls Inc. National Economic Literacy Curriculum called Equal Earners, Savvy Spenders.

All of the 12-14 year old members have been participating in this class where they are learning how to set financial goals, how to analyze messages about money, and how every individual contributes to the global economy.

In the Foundation Module, the girls created a money mural, naming all that comes to mind when thinking about money, and how many people may have differing ideas about money depending on a variety of factors.

The participants played a game called “Money Message Telephone” in which they passed along common messages about girls and money to each other and decided whether these were positive messages that they wanted to keep passing along, or if they were negative messages that perpetuated stereotypes and furthered the divide between men and women. This game led to a deeper discussion of where these messages about girls and money come from, and the girls were deeply moved by the idea that they could change that narrative and become financially independent young women in the future!

The girls participated in a variety of activities regarding needs and wants, how needs and wants vary from person to person, and how there are universal needs for all humans. This program has the girls thinking not only on a global scale, but brings it back to one’s wallet and ways she can earn her own money and create and stick to a personal budget.

Our girls are incredibly lucky to learn about money, the economy, and how to gain financial success as they think about their futures.
For the Love of Reading

Girls Inc. staff have noticed a monumental landslide of requests from parents to provide more direct literacy learning support to their girls. This has resulted in a revitalization of our literacy initiative to support growth in retention and fluency. Girls Inc. will be implementing a new course delving in visual literacy called *The Lowell We Live In*, where members will learn to assess images for the meanings they represent. They will make a seal for the city and draft proposals supporting their seal. Programs like this one support vital skills like research and development, persuasive writing, and information integration.

For the younger members, we are also implementing new classes to support early reading and writing skills. In *Lit Snack Attack*, members will practice skills like vocabulary, phonics and listening skills, by participating in fun, interactive read-out-louds of children’s classic books and playing hands-on games that support literacy proficiency. Each story will be accompanied by a nutritious snack that can be recreated at home.

For the history aficionados, a new program *History’s Mysteries* has been added to the schedule. This new class uses the “You Wouldn’t Want To...” children’s book series to provide a new perspective on famous historical time periods. Members have learned the reasons why *You Wouldn’t Want to Sail an Irish Famine Ship* and *You Wouldn’t Want to Be A Victorian Mill Worker*. Currently, they are exploring why *You Wouldn’t Want to Be A Nurse During the Civil War Era*. Each topic is broken into four classes that span a month and include reading and writing exercises related to the time period, as well as art, culture and science activities from the era. Members practice integration, retention, and parts of speech and sentence structure while creating original and imaginative journal entries.

These new classes, along with several others that have been included in the schedule, are part of the Girls Inc. National Literacy Initiative. They demonstrate the importance Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell places on meeting the need for out of school literacy learning and preventing literacy loss. We will be continuing the commitment to Literacy Learning in the 2018 Summer Program, with innovative, age-specific classes to promote a love of reading and excitement for learning.

UML’s Musical Engineers

Thanks to the support of the Lowell Community Development Block Grant and a partnership with UMass Lowell’s Music Engineering Department, Girls Inc. saw exponential growth in its Music Education Program, over the last few months. Funds from CDBG provided new musical instruments for our girls, such as, boomwhackers, hand drums and xylophones, which revitalized the program and sparked a renewed interest in Music Education. The new implementations, coupled with the direction and guidance of Marley Carlomagno, a professionally trained opera singer and Girls Inc. staff, have resulted in a robust and engaging program. Members are learning to explore the math behind the music while creating “mash-up” compositions of popular songs and playing those “mash-ups” on their new instruments.

UMass Lowell’s Music Engineering Department also provided our members with an exclusive opportunity to learn about the science of sound and build their own sound making contraption. During February Vacation, they gave a workshop that introduced members to how sound is created. Provided with a variety of recycled materials, members had the opportunity to pick out their own materials and engineer instruments to make a unique sound.

UML’s Musical Engineers returned for a second workshop later in the week. Building off the skills learned during their first visit, members worked together to create a 3′X 6′ structure that would generate an array of sounds. They had to develop their form from the materials provided and incorporate the basics of engineering to be sure the creation would stand independently. In the end, the girls measured up to the task and crafted an extraordinary sound machine (pictured left), which is on display at Girls Inc.
Reaching Out, Serving More Girls

We are proud to announce that our Outreach Program has seen great growth over the year! The Outreach Program currently has 20 ongoing partners, which includes local schools and community-based sites around Greater Lowell. The goal of the Outreach Program is to reach as many girls as possible in our community and inspire them to be Strong, Smart, and Bold.

Ongoing Outreach Sites Include:

- Morey Elementary School
- Moody Elementary School
- Reilly Elementary School
- Greenhalge Elementary School
- Dewing Elementary School
- Heathbrook Elementary School
- Wynn Middle School
- STEM Academy at the Rogers School
- Washington Elementary School
- Pyne Arts Magnet School
- Lowell Community Charter Public School
- Stoklosa Middle School
- Spark Academy
- The Children’s Center
- Northstreet Elementary School
- Trahan Elementary School
- McAuliffe Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- McAvinnie Elementary School
- Coalition for a Better Acre’s YES Program

Many of our partners participate in our Operation SMART (science, math, and relevant technologies) programming. This program allows the Outreach members to enjoy the world of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), get messy, and expand their mind through exploration by becoming chemists, engineers, astronomers, paleontologists, computer scientists, statisticians and more! A favorite STEM activity this session included learning about the female mathematicians in the book and movie, Hidden Figures. The members discovered how the women overcame adversity, were portrayed as “human computers,” and became four of the most influential people in space travel. Members had the opportunity to become “human computers” themselves, as they learned all about binary coding, and how computers today still store information. They then were able to use this technology to embed their name in code on a bracelet!

A sincere “thank you” to The Cummings Foundation, The Aubert J. Fay Charitable Fund, and the Lowell Community Development Block Grant for making it possible for us to continue expanding our Outreach Program. The generous support from individual donors and foundations allow us to ensure that as many girls as possible are receiving the tools and resources to become healthy, educated, and independent.

With the growth of the Outreach Program, we are looking for motivated individuals to join our team! The role of an Outreach Specialist is to plan and facilitate hands-on, educational activities for girls at our Outreach partner sites in Lowell and the surrounding towns during afterschool and summer hours.

If you are interested in inspiring girls to be strong, smart, and bold, and would like to learn more about our Outreach staff positions, please send your resume and cover letter to:

Rachel MacGillivary, Outreach Coordinator
outreachcoordinator@girlsinclowell.org
SAVE THE DATES!

Summer Enrichment Program
Stay informed with summer program updates at:
http://girlsinclowell.org/programs/summer/

The Board of Directors of Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell cordially invites you to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation
On Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at 12:15 pm
220 Worthen Street, Lowell
Please R.S.V.P. by May 4, 2018 (978) 458 – 6529