



## **Anna Maria Chávez Selected Chief Executive Officer of Girl Scouts of the USA**

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**New York, N.Y.**—Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) announced today that Anna Maria Chávez, who grew up in a small town in southern Arizona and rose to become deputy chief of staff to that state's then-Gov. Janet Napolitano, has been appointed to the top post at the iconic organization. Chávez is set to officially assume her new role at the Girl Scouts National Council Session/52nd Convention in November.

Chávez's appointment as the 19th chief executive of Girl Scouts, among the largest and most widely recognized nonprofits in the country, comes as the organization readies to launch a national celebration as part of its 100th anniversary designed to honor its legacy and create urgency around girls' issues. She will replace Kathy Cloninger, who is retiring after leading the organization for eight years.

"Girl Scouts is the premier leadership organization for girls with a trailblazing legacy that stretches nearly 100 years," said Chávez, who currently serves as chief executive officer of Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas. "The country has never needed Girl Scouts more than it does today. What girls are accomplishing in Girl Scouting is inspiring. I have seen it firsthand in Texas, and I intend to tell that story far and wide. I'm eager to work with our partners across the country as the organization embarks on a new century of empowering girls to take the lead in their own lives and make a difference in their communities and across the world."

Connie Lindsey, National President of Girl Scouts of the USA, said: "Anna Maria is the right person at the right time for our organization. She has a tremendous track record, and her visionary leadership is going to be invaluable as we work to fulfill our mission to be the premier leadership experience for girls in ways that are relevant, engaging and meaningful."

Chávez was appointed chief executive of the Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas in 2009 after serving as deputy chief of staff for urban relations and community development for former Arizona governor and current U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano. As deputy chief of staff, she promoted the governor's policies, programs and initiatives through coordination and partnership with city, county,

and tribal governments, federal agencies and community organizations. In addition, she served as the governor's policy advisor to the Arizona Department of Housing and advised Napolitano on strategies for coordinating housing and economic development. Prior to being appointed as deputy chief of staff, Chávez served as Napolitano's director of intergovernmental affairs from 2003 to 2007. She also served as in-house counsel and assistant director for the Division of Aging & Community Services (DACS) at the Arizona Department of Economic Security. Chávez entered state government after serving as senior policy advisor to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater. Previously, she had been chief of staff to the deputy administrator at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in Washington, D.C. Chávez also served as chief of staff for SBA's Office of Government Contracting and Minority Enterprise Development.

Chávez will take over as chief executive after a dramatic period of change for the organization. Cloninger has led Girl Scouts through a historic transformation designed to ensure that the organization delivers the best leadership experience for a new generation of girls whose lives—and the opportunities they face—are ever changing. The wide-ranging effort has included consolidating councils from 312 to 112, as well as developing a nationally consistent program portfolio for girls that includes a series of leadership journeys, or coordinated series of activities grouped around a theme, and a revamped system of badges and awards that align with the leadership program.

In addition, Girl Scouts in 2010 launched a national brand campaign, known by the tagline *What Did You Do Today?*, which is designed to inspire girls and adults to join Girl Scouts in making a difference in the world. Girl Scouts is set to launch in 2012 its first-ever nationwide fundraising campaign that will extend over five years.

“What a testament to the kind of leadership we have within the Girl Scout Movement that we were able to select one of our own to lead our organization into its second century,” said Cloninger, who acceded to the top post after nearly three decades of executive roles in Girl Scouting, including as chief executive officer of the Girl Scout Council of Cumberland Valley in Tennessee. “Anna Maria exemplifies the leadership qualities that we strive to teach all of our girls and she is going to be an inspiration to all girls and a strong advocate on their behalf.”

Chávez grew up in a Mexican-American family in the small town of Eloy, Arizona, and later in Phoenix. She holds a law degree from the University of Arizona College of Law and a bachelor's degree in American history from Yale University. Bar admissions include the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona, Arizona Supreme Court, and U.S. Supreme Court. Her husband Robert is a financial industry executive and they have a son, Michael.

Over the past 99 years, there have been 18 national CEOs. The first three were known as national secretaries and the next four as national directors. From 1935 until 2002, the title was national executive director. Since then, GSUSA's top post has been termed chief executive officer.

### **About Girl Scouts**

Founded in 1912, Girl Scouts of the USA is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls with 3.2 million girl and adult members worldwide. Girl Scouts is the leading authority on girls' healthy development, and builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. The organization serves girls from every corner of the United States and its territories. Girl Scouts of the USA also serves American girls and their classmates attending American or international schools

overseas in 90 countries. For more information on how to join, volunteer, reconnect, or donate to Girl Scouts, call (800) GSUSA 4 U or visit [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org).

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### GSUSA Chief Executive Officers

Edith D. Johnston	June 1913
Cora Neal	June 1914
Montague Gammon	June 1916
Abby Porter Leland	August 1917
Jane Deeter Rippin	February 1919
Josephine Schain	November 1930
Constance Rittenhouse	September 1935
Dorothy C. Stratton	December 1950
Sally Stickney Cortner	July 1960 (Interim)
Louise A. Wood	May 1961
Dr. Cecily Cannan Selby	April 1972
Frank H. Kannis	September 1975 (Interim)
Frances R. Hesselbein	July 1976
Mary Rose Main	February 1990
Joel E. Becker	October 1997 (Interim)
Marsha Johnson Evans	January 1998
Jackie Barnes	July 2002 (Interim)
Kathy Cloninger	October 2003