



EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN'S COACHING

## The Tiara Spotlight

Shining our light on inspiring women around the world.

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**Maria Wynne**

CEO, Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana

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### **What are you passionate about?**

The interconnectedness between education, creativity and innovation and its results and... of course, girls!

### **Why are you involved in your business?**

Because of our mission to provide girls with every opportunity to be what they can be in the future and to have them take on the mission of "making the world a better place."

### **How did you end up here? What's your journey been like?**

While at Microsoft, I led an economic development initiative with mayors and governors across the country and I witnessed firsthand the state of youth in the workforce across the U.S. and realized I could make a difference.

### **How do you recharge your batteries or nourish yourself?**

I enjoy spending time with my family and am actively involved in the theatre community. I am a lifelong learner and I am committed to making a contribution. My participation on the boards of the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, North Central College, and the Donors Forum provides inspiration and motivation.

### **What are you grateful for?**

For my parents and for the amazing opportunities I've had, including the opportunity to grow up outside the U.S. and being exposed to different cultures.

### **How do your clients benefit from your products/services?**

The girls develop lifelong skills and discover their full potential. We have numerous examples of girls who credit the Girl Scouts for helping shape their future. Joanne Dynak joined the Girl Scouts at age five. She learned to ski, sail, and ride a horse. She even survived alone in the woods at camp. But it was at Camp CEO, our weeklong executive mentoring program, where she developed relationships with executive mentors who inspired her to dream big, be a confident leader and make key decisions in her life. Joanne is now at Harvard after being forced to select between Yale and Harvard this year – both offering full scholarships.

Another amazing story of transformation is Chicago's own Southside Divas, who have competed for the last three years in First LEGO league competitions as one of our Girl Scout-sponsored teams. The Divas hail from Chicago's south side economically disadvantaged neighborhoods of Chatham, Englewood, Auburn and Austin. Their troop leaders and mothers are the driving force. They have the desire to see their girls become leaders and the true grit to



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help make it happen. We hear over and over again from them that if their girls didn't have the opportunities available through Girl Scouts – especially LEGO Robotics – they would never be able to achieve this type of success.

These girls are now very interested in STEM as a direct result of their involvement with Girl Scouts and LEGO Robotics. Keena Preston attends the Lindblom Math and Science Academy and is currently taking the pre-engineering elective. She is learning about robotics, engineer design, electronics, math, science, and various technologies. Danielle Peck at Ogden International School Interbaccalaureate (I.B.) told us that she was so thankful for Girl Scouts and LEGO because it taught her confidence and how to represent herself well.

**As a woman leader what are your unique strengths that help you and your team succeed?**

Vision, fearlessness, building high performance teams, and the portfolio of skills I gained in the private sector that I now apply daily to my work as the CEO of the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana.

**What inspires you?**

Possibility, potential, and the future of girls.

**What's next? What are you committed to?**

Changing the face of our workforce, stemming the workforce crisis we have today and making sure the pipeline includes girls who dream of every opportunity because they are prepared for the future and because they can pursue big dreams. I am committed to education and to creating opportunities for girls. I am committed to equipping girls so they can pursue their dreams. And...dreaming up the look and the experiences that will shape the camp of the future.