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Press Conference announces Pensacola area Women of Distinction

PENSACOLA, FL – Girl Scouts of the Florida Panhandle held a press conference Wednesday, August 10th announcing this year’s area Women of Distinction.

This year’s honorees are women who have distinguished themselves through service and leadership in their respective community. GSCFP is pleased to present this year’s Woman of the Year Diamond Award, the Girl Scout Lifetime Achievement Pearl Award, and the Emerging Woman of Distinction Award.

Dr. Judith Bense, President of the University of West Florida, is this year’s Woman of the Year Diamond Award recipient.

“Dr. Bense is a powerful example of a woman in a leadership role who has the ability to facilitate change. Currently, women only make up 23 percent of collegiate presidencies, but with programs like Anthropology/Archaeology at UWF, that number is sure to increase in the very near future,” said Raslean M. Allen, CEO of GSCFP. “Susan serves as a role model for how courage, confidence and character can mold today’s young women into tomorrow’s leaders.”

Kitty Poulson, of Ft. Walton Beach, is this year’s Girl Scout Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Poulson has been very instrumental in the Girl Scout movement as a girl and adult in the greater Pensacola and Ft. Walton Beach area. She was an integral part of the council’s day camp in Fort Walton Beach, serving as a unit leader, canoe instructor, and swimming instructor.

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“As an adult, I felt that Girl Scouting fit the way I wanted to live my life, and have continued working with troops through many years and in many places,” said Poulson. “I even ran my household of 6 children using a Kaper Chart (a traditional Girl Scout tool) for the fair distribution of jobs.”

Robin Heller, co-founder, treasurer and head coach of SEASTARS Aquatics, is this year’s Emerging Woman of Distinction. SEASTARS (Supporting Education and Athletic Skills through Amateur and Recreational Swimming), a 501(c)-(3) nonprofit organization, is dedicated to promoting the success and growth of children who are economically, physically and mentally challenged by providing individualized attention as a part of a structured competitive swim team. “Our goal is to empower kids to be successful in and out of the water,” said Heller, “These kids want to swim; everyone who wants to be there and are committed.”

The 2011 Women of Distinction Awards Luncheon is September 29, 2011 at New World Landing, 600 South Palafox Street, Pensacola, FL 32502.

For sponsorship or ticket information please contact Michelle Kyser, Chief Development Officer, at 850-434-1333 or ekyser@gscfp.org.

The Girl Scout Council of the Florida Panhandle invites girls from kindergarten to twelfth grade, to join the adventure and empower themselves through courage, confidence and character, to make the world a better place. Currently, the council serves 6, 024 girls and 1,980 volunteers across 19 counties of the Florida Panhandle. To volunteer or join Girl Scouts, contact the local council office at 1-888-271-8778 or visit www.gscfp.org. Girl Scouts of the Florida Panhandle is a United Way Agency.

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