



Girl Scouts Supports Black Lives Matter

June 16, 2020

Dear New Mexico Trails Families and Volunteers,

I want to apologize that you haven't heard from us sooner about the importance of addressing the national discussion on racism and injustice. Our intention was to boldly step forward and make sure that you knew, in no uncertain terms, how we feel about #BlackLivesMatter and the role of Girl Scouts during this historic time. Shortly after we began communicating with other councils about the best way to tackle this massive issue, I received the horrible news that my stepmother of 31 years was being moved to a Hospice facility. I had to ask our team to pause so I could fly to Florida and say goodbye to my "bonus mom."



During my absence, our resolve grew stronger that we must act now to demonstrate how important we feel this issue is. We believe that it is impossible to "build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place" without it being in the very fabric of who they are. To this end, we are encouraging our girls, volunteers and staff to explore and appreciate the principles of diversity, inclusion and anti-racism. We are proud to be affiliated with Girl Scouts USA as they acknowledge the work ahead to ensure anti-racism becomes a part of our organizational culture, and we are committed to doing our part to support New Mexico families and volunteers as you prepare for the courageous conversations that will shape the future of our council, state and country.

Here's where we stand:

- We are working on a panel discussion with Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails' volunteers about racism and inclusion that will be shared with you later this month.

- We are collaborating with other councils to develop a program that directly identifies opportunities for girls to explore the topic of systemic racism.
- We are committed to being a resource for you as a parent or volunteer, which involves listening intently and educating ourselves on the historic oppression of People of Color.
- We are closely following GSUSA's guidance on where our place is in the larger conversation.

If this is a discussion that you feel passionately about participating in, I encourage you to reach out and let me know. **Your voice is welcome here.**

And if you haven't seen it yet, please read below for GSUSA's statement on race and equity:

Black Lives Matter. We need to make that clear. Racism goes against the values of Girl Scouts, and although we have acted to counter racism throughout our history, we know we have enormous work ahead of us to build a truly anti-racist organization. We are prioritizing these efforts, both on an individual level and within every aspect of Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts of the USA and all 111 Girl Scout councils will engage in challenging discussions, center voices we haven't listened to in the past, act with integrity, and learn from any missteps. We pledge to never stop working to create the just and equitable world that every girl, and all of us, deserve.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Rebecca Latham
CEO
Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails